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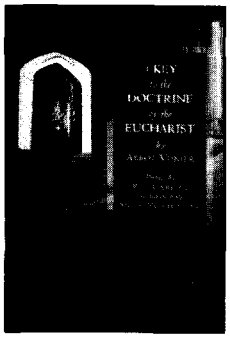

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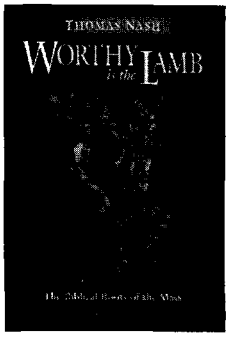

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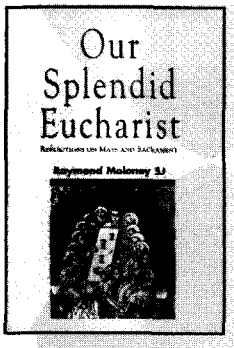

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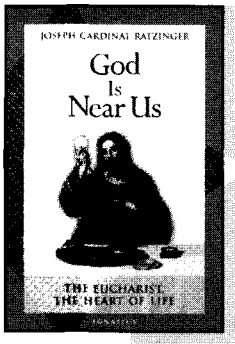

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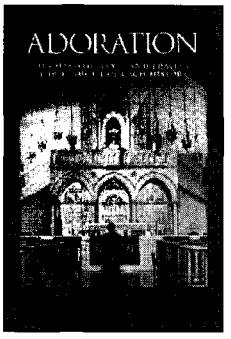

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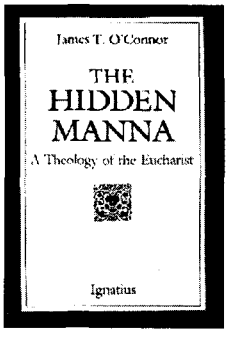

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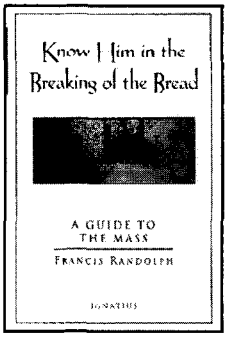

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First Things (ISSN #1047-5141) is published monthly (except for combined issues June/July and August/September) for $34 per year ($14.97 for students) by the Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: send address changes to First Things, P.O. Box 401, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Editorial Offices:** The Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. **Editorial Phone:** (212) 627-1985. **Email:** ft@firstthings.com. **Website:** http://www.firstthings.com. **Advertising Offices:** 129 Phelps Avenue, Suite 312, Rockford, IL 61108. **Advertising Phone:** (815) 398-8569. **Email:** firstthingsadsales@pma-inc.net. **Subscription Department:** P.O. Box 401, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Subscription Phone:** 1-877-905-9920. **Email:** frth@kable.com. Unsolicited material cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient return postage. Newsstand distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., One Media Way, 12406 Rt. 250, Milan, OH 44846.

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FIRST THINGS is published by Religion and Public Life, an interreligious, nonpartisan research and education institute whose purpose is to advance a religiously informed public philosophy for the ordering of society.

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The Judaism of Jesus

In "*The Passion*'s Passionate Despisers" (June/July), Kenneth L. Woodward summed up his critique of the Jewish critics of the film by writing that "Jews should realize [it] is not about them." Mr. Woodward's conclusion is accurate, but that is precisely the problem with the movie.

Jesus was Jewish and he never renounced Judaism. In fact, Jesus clearly stated that he did not come to change the Law, i.e., the Torah and its teachings, but rather to fulfill it. This is exactly the pledge that all Jews take on their bar/bat mitzvah day. Almost all of the followers of Jesus during his lifetime, i.e., in the time frame of the movie, were Jewish. Jesus did not introduce a single new moral concept and all of his moral teachings came straight from the Torah. The Golden Rule, for example, is stated clearly in the Torah and the Torah even extends this rule to include non-Jewish immigrants in addition to neighbors.

Jesus did have conflicts with the Jewish establishment, but his complaints were typically Jewish complaints that Jews had had and expressed for centuries. Jesus fought the Sadducees because they believed in a form of Judaism in which special privileges were provided to a small minority, i.e., priests, and in which this minority put itself between the people and God. It is interesting that present-day Judaism has rid itself of this priestly class, while Christianity (and especially Catholicism) has not. Jesus also had conflicts with the Pharisees, but these complaints concerned their use of the Oral Law or extra-Torah sources to interpret the Law. This is the same complaint that was lodged by the Karaites centuries later, and it is also the theological basis of the largest present-day Jewish sect, the Reform movement.

Mr. Woodward is correct that *The Passion* is not about Jews, but that, to repeat the point, is the problem. All of its characters (aside from a few Romans) are Jews and all of the issues it raises are Jewish issues.

Ivan M. Lang
Glendale, Wisconsin

Kenneth L. Woodward replies:
I thought I was clear in my article when I wrote, "Gibson's Christ is not the parable-telling, *halacha*-defying rabbi that Reform Judaism at its origins more than a century ago promoted as a figure closer to its own tradition than to Christianity." This is the Jesus Mr. Lang wants to find in Gibson's film, but he is not there. I would add that the "fulfillment of the Law" spoken of in the New Testament has nothing to do with the bar/bat mitzvah pledge but everything to do with the passion and death that Gibson's film portrays. Similarly, the priesthood of Christ, and therefore of the Catholic Church, has nothing to do with the Sadducees but everything to do with the sacrifice Jesus completed on the cross, which is celebrated in the Mass by all the faithful through the ordained ministry of the priesthood, which in no way gets between Christians and their God. Rather, it unites the people as the body of Christ.

A Catholic Shakespeare?

Edward T. Oakes' review of three recent books on William Shakespeare (June/July) puts me in mind of Hugh Ross Williamson's line to the effect that wondering whether Shakespeare was a recusant is like asking whether Abraham Isaac Jacob Solomon is a Jew. No one element is conclusive in

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itself, but all of them together suggest Cardinal Newman's "convergence of probabilities." One prothonotary warbler does not make a May Day, but Shakespeare has bare ruined choirs full of them. The very "plausible deniability" of the evidence is itself further proof. Ultimately it is the difference between seeing the edifice from the outside and living inside of it. If there is such a thing as the argument from history, then the burden of proof lies with those asserting that the world's greatest playwright was an Anglican.

Blaise Thompson
Toronto, Ontario

Edward T. Oakes replies:
Unfortunately, Blaise Thompson is not the only one who likes to apply the logic of "plausible deniability" to hypotheses supported by flimsy evidence. Oxfordians also use it to explain why Edward de Vere didn't want the plays he wrote to be known as his. To me, arguments from plausible deniability smack too much of the old argument from silence, on which *The Da Vinci Code* rests its case: Jesus was married, but the New Testament suppressed the fact. The argument allows for just about anything but square circles (you can't see the invisible cat on my chair because it's invisible). And speaking of the argument from silence, I never said Shakespeare was an Anglican, just that I don't know what his personal convictions were. I don't doubt he was patriotic, but was he royalist or republican? I don't think the plays tell us. Similarly, if he was a Catholic at the time of the Gunpowder Plot, how did he react to this act of Catholic treason, when religiously motivated terrorism first reared its ugly head? Again, we don't know, except, I suppose, that he took a dim view of Jesuit participation in the plot. Outside of those slim pickings, Shakespeare hides behind his characters, so effectively in fact that the Authorship Controversy still drags on to this day. But I like to imagine that, just as he managed to avoid Elizabeth's thought-police while he was alive, Shakespeare is today smiling like the Cheshire Cat at the way he has so far avoided getting pinned down by contemporary critics, historians, Oxfordians, Catholicizers—and theologians.

The Spirit of Reaction

David B. Hart's "Freedom and Decency" (June/July) reminded me of the writings of the great twentieth-century American critic Paul Elmer More. More was a Christian humanist and Platonist whose literary and cultural criticism appeared in the *Independent*, the *New York Evening Post*, and the *Nation* from 1901 to 1914. Now among the "forgotten men" of the New Humanism, in his day he was praised by Walter Lippmann in the following encomium: "To read him is to enter an austere and elevated realm of ideas and to know a man who, in the guise of a critic, is authentically concerned with the first and last things of human experience."

Some think Western culture and civilization so decadent that it is no longer worth saving or defending. They are wrong. For all our faults, we in America are still engaged in a worthwhile experiment in human liberty. This side of the *Parousia*, we remain the best hope for mankind.

It is the moral thing to continue to criticize that which is wrong in our culture, and in that respect I express my sincere admiration for Dr. Hart. He continues in the long and noble tradition of intelligent criticism, contrasting the beauties of eternal and universal truths with the vulgar fashions of the moment, even at the price of being labeled a "reactionary." When this familiar epithet was thrown at More, he responded, "The world is not contradicted with impunity, and he who sets himself against the world's belief will have need of all a man's endurance and all a man's strength. . . . If a man doubts this, let him try, and learn. Submission to the philosophy of change is the real effeminacy; it is the virile part to react."

Gary Inbinder
Woodland Hills, California

David B. Hart replies:
My thanks to Gary Inbinder for an elegant response to my article, and I can assure him that Paul Elmer More is not an entirely forgotten man.

There is not space here to address the substance of Mr. Inbinder's concluding reflections. I should say, however, that "Western civilization" (which for me, I must be clear, means "Christendom") is something of which I would never despair, however much I might despair of the present state of Western culture. The particular question of our "experiment in human liberty" is far too intricate to unfold here, unfortunately, especially as regards its implication in the larger history of the voluntarist misprision of freedom that I have claimed is the besetting heresy of modernity.

Neither, however, do I grant that America is, this side of the *Parousia*, the best hope of mankind. That title I can accord only to the Church, which springs up and flourishes in whatsoever places the Spirit—who is notoriously unpredictable—chooses. Seen thus, there are certain respects in which it may be the case that at present Nigeria is more important for the future development of mankind than the United States. I love my country, but here we have no enduring city, and one should avoid hyperbole.

Reckoning with Goldhagen

Regarding Richard John Neuhaus' criticism of my *Azure* review of Daniel J. Goldhagen's *A Moral Reckoning* (While We're At It, June/July), I feel it is necessary to of-

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fer a clarification. My review of that book was mixed, since I agree with some of Goldhagen's analysis regarding Catholic anti-Semitism and the origins of the Shoah. I certainly do not believe his proposals to radically reform Catholicism are practicable, though some changes are inevitable and desirable.

Father Neuhaus' claim that a few years ago I helped "to torpedo a Jewish-Catholic project studying Vatican archives pertinent to the Holocaust" is somewhat more perplexing. The historical commission to which Fr. Neuhaus refers came to an end because the Vatican was not ready at the time to grant us access to the archives we needed for our work. Since then, a significant part of those archives has been opened (though not yet for the crucial period from 1939 to 1945)—an important move that I welcome. I believe that my principled position to end the commission was correct at the time—and I sincerely hope that all of the material that scholars (Catholic, Jewish, and others) would like to see will eventually be made available.

Robert S. Wistrich
Director
Vidal Sassoon International Center
for the Study of Antisemitism
Jerusalem

RJN replies:
Professor Wistrich's clarification that he does not deem the end of Catholicism something to be hoped for is welcome. As to his role in ending the work of the commission, many Catholics and Jews, including other members of the commission, were not amused.

Catholic Charities?

Richard John Neuhaus' assessment of the California Supreme Court case requiring charities to provide prescription contraception coverage is off the mark (While We're At It, June/July). The case addressed a specific Catholic charity and found that, as a matter of law, it did not meet any of the requirements in the legislation under consideration that would characterize it as being religious in nature. It was not a question of being "religious enough," as Father Neuhaus claims. Rather, the court found that the charity wasn't religious at all, and rightfully so.

Catholic Charities of Sacramento, Inc., v. The Superior Court addressed "a church-affiliated employer's constitutional challenges to the Women's Contraception Equity Act (WCEA), under which certain health and disability insurance contracts must cover prescription contraceptives." The ruling of the court forces Catholic Charities of Sacramento to provide birth control benefits to any employee upon request or cease providing any drug coverage to all of its employees. The decision should serve as a warning to Catholic charity organizations everywhere.

The WCEA defines a "religious employer" as "an entity for which each of the following is true: the inculcation of religious values is the purpose of the entity; the entity primarily employs persons who share the religious tenets of the entity; and the entity serves primarily persons who share the religious tenets of the entity."

Whether we like it or not, Catholic Charities of Sacramento, by its own admission, does not inculcate religious values, does not employ a majority of Catholics in its work force, and does not serve primarily persons who are in communion with Rome. In other words, giving money to Catholic Charities of Sacramento is no different than giving money to the United Way.

The most serious problem presented by many Catholic charities is that they fail to promote a sense of Catholic identity among American Catholics. Most other religious charities, whether serving primarily Muslims, Methodists, Hindus, or Lutherans, are able to form a sense of identity with those they help. Catholics in California and elsewhere have a right to know that there is a place for them to go when they are in need—a place where they will be helped by an organization that is Catholic rather than secular in nature.

The current approach of offering social services to the general public and employing a diverse group of persons, the majority of whom are not Catholic, is counter to the identity of the Catholic Church in this country. When Catholic Charities starts acting like a religious organization then maybe the courts will start treating it like one.

Leonard Stevens
Sherman Oaks, California

RJN replies:
Mr. Stevens makes important points. I do not know the facts regarding Sacramento, but one should keep in mind that entities going by the name of Catholic Charities vary from diocese to diocese. The third criterion in California law for a "religious employer" should be challenged. There is nothing wrong and, one might argue, a great deal that is right with an organization motivated by religious faith to serve everyone, regardless of religious affiliation or lack thereof. But an organization calling itself Catholic should have high among its purposes the sharing of the Catholic faith and, to that end, would have to have a sufficient number of Catholic employees. Historically, and in some places, Catholic Charities denied its specifically religious purpose in order to receive government funding. That is the problem addressed by President Bush's "faith-based initiative." But if a nominally religious entity has no distinctively religious purpose, Mr. Stevens is right that it should be entitled neither to religious exemptions in law nor to the support of the pertinent religious constituency.

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Opinion

Strange Science

Thomas Sieger Derr

Global warming has achieved the status of a major threat. It inspires nightmares of a troubled future and propels apocalyptic dramas such as the summer 2004 movie *The Day After Tomorrow*. Even were the Kyoto treaty to be fully implemented, it wouldn't make a dent in the warming trend, which seems to be inexorable. Doom is upon us.

Except that maybe it isn't. You might not know it from ordinary media accounts, which report the judgments of alarmists as "settled science," but there is a skeptical side to the argument. Scientists familiar with the issues involved have written critically about the theory of global warming. The puzzle is why these commentators, well-credentialed and experienced, have been swept aside to produce a false "consensus." What is it that produces widespread agreement among both "experts" and the general public on a hypothesis which is quite likely wrong?

The consensus holds that we are experiencing unprecedented global warming and that human activity is the main culprit. The past century, we are told, has been the hottest on record, with temperatures steadily rising during the last decades. Since human population and industrial activity have risen at the same time, it stands to reason that human activity is, one way or another, the cause of this observed warming. Anything wrong with this reasoning?

Quite a lot, as it turns out. The phrase "on record" doesn't mean very much, since most records date from the latter part of the nineteenth century. Without accurate records there are still ways of discovering the temperatures of past centuries, and these methods do not confirm the theory of a steady rise. Reading tree rings helps (the rings are further apart when the temperature is warmer and the trees grow faster). Core samples from drilling in ice fields can yield even older data. Some historical reconstruction can help, too—for example, we know that the Norsemen settled Greenland (and named it "green") a millennium ago and grew crops there, in land which is today quite inhospitable to settlement, let alone to agriculture. Other evidence comes from coral growth, isotope data from sea floor sediment, and insects, all of which point to a very warm climate in medieval times. Abundant testimony tells us that the European climate then cooled dramatically from the thirteenth century until the eighteenth, when it began its slow rewarming.

In sum, what we learn from multiple sources is that the earth (and not just Europe) was warmer in the tenth century than it is now, that it cooled dramatically in the middle of our second millennium (this has been called the "little ice age"), and then began warming again. Temperatures were higher in medieval times (from about 800 to 1300) than they are now, and the twentieth century represented a recovery from the little ice age to something like normal. The false perception that the recent warming trend is out of the ordinary is heightened by its being measured from an extraordinarily cold starting point, without taking into account the earlier balmy medieval period, sometimes called the Medieval Climate Optimum. Data such as fossilized sea shells indicate that similar natural climate swings occurred in prehistoric times, well before the appearance of the human race.

Even the period for which we have records can be misread. While the average global surface temperature increased by about 0.5 degrees Celsius during the twentieth century, the major part of that warming occurred in the early part of the century, before the rapid rise in human population and before the consequent rise in emissions of polluting substances into the atmosphere. There was actually a noticeable cooling period after World War II, and this climate trend produced a rather different sort of alarmism—some predicted the return of an ice age. In 1974 the National Science Board, observing a thirty-year-long decline in world temperature, predicted the end of temperate times and the dawning of the next glacial age. Meteorologists, *Newsweek* reported, were "almost unanimous in the view that the trend will reduce agricultural productivity for the rest of the century." But they were wrong, as we now know (another caution about supposedly "unanimous" scientific opinion), and after 1975 we began to experience our current warming trend. Notice that these fluctuations, over the centuries and within them, do not correlate with human numbers or activity. They are evidently caused by something else.

What, then, is the cause of the current warming trend? As everyone has heard, the emission of so-called "greenhouse gasses," mostly carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels, is supposed to be the major culprit in global warming. This is the anthropogenic hypothesis, according to which humans have caused the trouble. But such emissions correlate with human numbers and industrial development, so they could not have been the cause of warming centuries ago, nor of the nineteenth-century rewarming trend which began with

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a much smaller human population and before the industrial revolution. Nor is there a very good correlation between atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and past climate changes. Thus, to many scientists, the evidence that greenhouse gasses produced by humans are causing any significant warming is sketchy.

The likeliest cause of current climate trends seems to be solar activity, perhaps in combination with galactic cosmic rays caused by supernovas, especially because there is some good observable correlation between solar magnetism output and terrestrial climate change. But that kind of change is not predictable within any usable time frame, not yet anyway, and, of course, it is entirely beyond any human influence. The conclusion, then, is that the climate will change naturally; aside from altering obviously foolish behavior, such as releasing dangerous pollutants into our air and water, we can and should do little more than adapt to these natural changes, as all life has always done.

That is not a counsel of despair, however, for global warming is not necessarily a bad thing. Increasing warmth and higher levels of carbon dioxide help plants to grow (carbon dioxide is not a pollutant), and, indeed, mapping by satellite shows that the earth has become about six percent greener overall in the past two decades, with forests expanding into arid regions (though the effect is uneven). The Amazon rain forest was the biggest gainer, despite the much-advertised deforestation caused by human cutting along its edges. Certainly climate change does not help every region equally and will probably harm some. That has always been true. But there are careful studies that predict overall benefit to the earth with increasing warmth: fewer storms (not more), more rain, better crop yields over larger areas, and longer growing seasons, milder winters, and decreasing heating costs in colder latitudes. The predictable change, though measurable, will not be catastrophic at all—maybe one degree Celsius during the twenty-first century. The news is certainly not all bad, and may on balance be rather good.

There is much more, in more detail, to the argument of those scientists who are skeptical about the threat of global warming. On the whole, their case is, I think, quite persuasive. The question, then, is why so few people believe it.

Part of the answer is that bad news is good news—for the news media. The media report arresting and frightening items, for that is what draws listeners, viewers, and readers. The purveyors of climate disaster theories have exploited this journalistic habit quite brilliantly, releasing steadily more frightening scenarios without much significant data to back them up. Consider the unguarded admission of Steven Schneider of Stanford, a leading proponent of the global warming theory. In a now notorious comment, printed in *Discover* in 1989 and, surely to his discomfort, often cited by his opponents, Schneider admitted:

> To capture the public imagination, we have to offer up scary scenarios, make simplified dramatic statements, and make little mention of any doubts we may have. Each of us has to decide what the right balance is between being effective and being honest.

This sort of willingness to place the cause above the truth has exasperated Richard Lindzen, Sloan Professor of Meteorology at MIT, who is one of the authors of the science sections of the report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the body responsible for an increasing crescendo of dire warnings. In testimony before the U.S. Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee, he called the IPCC's Summary for Policymakers, which loudly sounds the warming alarm, "very much a child's exercise of what might possibly happen . . . [which] conjures up some scary scenarios for which there is no evidence."

This brings us to the second part of the answer, which concerns the political and economic consequences of the policy argument. The IPCC is a UN body and reflects UN politics, which are consistently favorable to developing countries, the majority of its members. Those politics are very supportive of the Kyoto treaty, which not only exempts the developing countries from emissions standards but also requires compensatory treatment from the wealthier nations for any economic restraints that new climate management policies may impose on these developing countries. Were Kyoto to be implemented as written, the developing countries would gain lots of money and free technology. One need not be a cynic to grasp that a UN body will do obeisance to these political realities wherever possible.

The Kyoto treaty would not make a measurable difference in the climate—by 2050, a temperature reduction of maybe two-hundredths of a degree Celsius, or at most six-hundredths of a degree—but the sacrifices it would impose on the United States would be quite large. It would require us to reduce our projected 2012 energy use by 25 percent, a catastrophic economic hit. Small wonder that the Senate in 1997 passed a bipartisan resolution, the Byrd-Hagel anti-Kyoto resolution, by 95-0 (a fact rarely recalled by those who claim that America's refusal to sign on to the treaty was the result of the Bush administration's thralldom to corporate interests).

Most of the European countries that have ratified Kyoto are falling behind already on targets, despite

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having stagnant economies and falling populations. It is highly unlikely they will meet the goals they have signed on for, and they know it. Neither will Japan, for that matter. The European Union has committed itself to an eight percent reduction in energy use (from 1990 levels) by 2012, but the European Environment Agency admits that current trends project only a 4.7 percent reduction. When Kyoto signers lecture non-signers for not doing enough for the environment, they invite the charge of hypocrisy. There is also the obvious fact that adherence to the treaty will hurt the U.S. economy much more than the European, which suggests that old-fashioned economic competitiveness is in the mix of motives at play here. The absurdity of the treaty becomes obvious when we recognize that it does not impose emissions requirements on developing countries, including economic giants such as China, India, and Brazil. (China will become the world's biggest source of carbon dioxide emissions in just a few years.)

A third reason why global warming fears seem to be carrying the day goes beyond these political interests; it involves intellectual pride. Academics are a touchy tribe (I'm one of them); they do not take it kindly when their theories, often the result of hard work, are contradicted. And sure enough, the struggle for the truth in this matter is anything but polite. It is intellectual warfare, entangled with politics, reputations, and ideology; and most of the anger comes from the side of the alarmists. People lose their tempers and hurl insults—"junk science," "willful ignorance," "diatribe," "arrogant," "stupid," "incompetent," "bias," "bad faith," "deplorable misinformation," and more. Consider the fiercely hateful reaction to Bjorn Lomborg's 2001 book, *The Skeptical Environmentalist*. He challenged the entrenched and politically powerful orthodoxy and did so with maddeningly thorough data. His critics, unable to refute his statistics, seem to have been enraged by their own weakness—a familiar phenomenon, after all. Or perhaps, with their reputations and their fund-raising ability tied to the disaster scenarios, they felt their livelihoods threatened. In any case, the shrillness of their voices has helped to drown out the skeptics.

Finally, there is a fourth cause: a somewhat murky antipathy to modern technological civilization as the destroyer of a purer, cleaner, more "natural" life, a life where virtue dwelt before the great degeneration set in. The global warming campaign is the leading edge of an environmentalism which goes far beyond mere pollution control and indicts the global economy for its machines, its agribusiness, its massive movements of goods, and above all its growing population. Picking apart this argument to show the weakness of its pieces does not go to the heart of the fear and loathing that motivate it. The revulsion shows in the prescriptions advanced by the global warming alarmists: roll back emissions to earlier levels; reduce production and consumption of goods; lower birth rates. Our material ease and the freedoms it has spawned are dangerous illusions, bargains with the devil, and now comes the reckoning. A major apocalypse looms, either to destroy or, paradoxically, to save us—if we come to our senses in the nick of time.

It is clear, then, given the deep roots of the scare, that it is likely to be pretty durable. It has the added advantage of not being readily falsifiable in our lifetimes; only future humans, who will have the perspective of centuries, will know for certain whether the current warming trend is abnormal. In the meantime, the sanest course for us would be to gain what limited perspective we can (remembering the global cooling alarm of a generation ago) and to proceed cautiously. We are going through a scare with many causes, and we need to step back from it, take a long second look at the scientific evidence, and not do anything rash. Though the alarmists claim otherwise, the science concerning global warming is certainly not settled. It is probable that the case for anthropogenic warming will not hold up, and that the earth is behaving as it has for millennia, with natural climate swings that have little to do with human activity.

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Us and Them

Maria Poggi Johnson

Six months out of grad school and into our first jobs, my husband and I fell in love with a house, a beautiful, eccentric Victorian. It was, of course, a fixer-upper, with a few caved-in ceilings, and it stood on a block that might be called borderline—there were some neglected houses nearby with bad landlords and worse tenants, a certain amount of drug activity, and there had been a shooting across the road the month before. This was why we could afford the house. On the plus side, there were a number of long-established stable families, and on the next block was a synagogue that was the center of a growing community of strictly observant Orthodox Jews. We persuaded ourselves

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that things couldn't get too bad, took a gamble, and bought the house.

Not only did things not get bad; they got very good indeed. Seven years later, the fixing-up is far from complete, but we have welcomed four babies into our home among the paint-pots and half-built bookcases, and the block, now free of trouble spots, has welcomed four new Orthodox Jewish families with twenty-three children among them. There is a thriving and cohesive community on our street, and to our surprise we have been cheerfully welcomed into many aspects of its life. We've been invited to numerous festive meals (of course, we could not return the favor, although my husband's single-malt scotch has been enthusiastically pronounced kosher), we have joined in neighborhood patrols when there was a spate of vandalism against the *succahs*, we have performed the office of what I believe is called a *Shabbos goy*, which involves setting the timer on an Orthodox family's heat and lights for the Sabbath when they forget to do so. We have taken our turn with the scissors when Binyomin had his first haircut at his third birthday party, and we have spent many hours sitting on doorsteps chatting idly and watching children practice riding tricycles. Having become good friends with a couple of families has made us automatically acquaintances of all the Orthodox in the neighborhood: children wave to me and mothers greet me when I walk past the Hebrew day school on my way to the office. We only wish that the sense of community among the Christians we know could rival what we have experienced among Orthodox Jews.

Living on the fringes of such a strong community is intriguing and deeply appealing in itself, and, of course, for us as Christians the fact that it is a Jewish community, intensely and vividly Jewish, is particularly meaningful. My theological views are much what they were—I'm a theologian by profession and had a pretty good handle on the whole Law/Gospel/Covenant thing at a theoretical level—but my grasp of and relation to my own faith has been altered profoundly by living on familiar terms with a religious reality that precedes and underpins my own, even as it differs dramatically. The imaginative and emotional resonances of the Holy Week liturgies and the Eucharist, to give just two examples, are deepened by the fact that I have friends for whom the phrase "paschal lamb" refers to what one eats on Passover.

Another effect has been the way I teach the introductory Bible course that all students at my university are required to take. When teaching about Mount Sinai, the Law, and the Covenant, for instance, I can fulfill my responsibilities as a Catholic and a scholar, be faithful to the teaching of *Dei Verbum*, and meet the departmental objectives for the course, if I (attempt to) help my students to understand the Law both as an ancient Near-Eastern legal, social, and ritual code, and as a revelation of the character and will of God and a key stage in the salvation history that culminates in the coming of Christ. And before living in this neighborhood I might have felt that was plenty. But now I feel I have not told my students the whole story unless I can get them to see a little of what I have learned from living in a place where the Law is not a historical relic or a preliminary stage in the plot of a larger story, but something vividly and vigorously alive in every aspect of life.

When possible I invite a good friend to talk to my students about the Law in her daily life. Initially she talked mainly about kosher laws and the Sabbath, but after coming to class a few times she got the measure of the students' reaction and now mischievously enjoys watching their jaws drop in disbelief as she describes dating and marriage, sex and modesty in Orthodox communities. They are fascinated and bewildered by the notion of according such deep and demanding seriousness to such things as time, food, and sex—things that they are used to handling with an eye to speedy self-fulfillment. Some of them would doubtless like to dismiss the whole thing as weirdness or fanaticism, but it is impossible to do that with my friend, who is a thoroughly appealing person—warm, clever, funny, and very obviously sane and happy. "Who's got it right?" she says, "Well, when Moshiach comes we'll just have to ask him 'well then, have you been here before, or is this your first time?'"

My attempt to put my students in touch with the Jewishness of the Scriptures is not limited to those Scriptures that Christians share with Jews. It is hard enough when we read the Old Testament to keep some students from throwing into their essays wildly anachronistic (rather than properly typological, which is way beyond most of them) references to Jesus and the Church. When we turn to the New Testament and meet the baby Jesus in the manger, they imagine themselves on home ground and they can become lazy. I have to remind them energetically that this is still a book largely by and about Jews; that although we are reading about the roots of the Church to which they belong, the world of the New Testament is very different from the novenas, CCD classes, and parish raffles of our area's deep-rooted Catholic culture. I find that the more I succeed in getting them to "think Jewish" the better readers of the text they become and the more attuned they are to the intense drama of the New Testament. If I can help them to grasp that the apostles and the Pharisees are as passionate about the Law and about their Jewishness

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as that lady in the hat who came to class to talk to us, then Jesus starts to look a lot more exciting and troubling. They can better appreciate what is at stake in the story of Cornelius' conversion if they can identify with Peter, who, tossed a few cryptic clues and forced to think on his feet, must rethink hundreds of years of religious tradition in the course of an afternoon. They must learn to side with the conservatives at the Jerusalem conference in the Acts of the Apostles in order to understand the depth of the debate about whether gentiles must be circumcised in order to become Christians.

If I have to remind my students to think Jewish, I have also to remind myself to think Christian. In my eagerness to help my students see that the decision at Jerusalem against circumcision was a difficult one to make, and in my fascination with the lives of my neighbors (a fascination in part foolish and romantic, I admit) I become half a Judaizer myself, and occasionally find myself musing about how it might be nice to do something with candles on Friday evenings or even keep just a very little bit kosher. When Paul bellows, "You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?" I have to shake myself and remember that this question has already been dealt with, and an answer has been given, with a clarity that it would be more than foolish to second-guess.

What precisely my students make of the heavily Jewish emphasis of my Bible courses or whether they will remember anything at all in the long term I cannot say. But at home the main day-to-day contact with Orthodox Jewish life is still through the children, and I can confidently say that these friendships will have a long-lasting impact. The neighborhood children live, like ours, in homes without video games or cable TV. Our tree house with a slide and our big box of dress-up clothes are enough to render our house a highly desirable venue and some collection of neighborhood children is at our home most days. They are all a mother could desire in her children's friends—they are friendly, polite, good at sharing, and they are unlikely ever to set undesirable examples with regard to skimpy t-shirts and obnoxious music, or to share unhelpful stories about mom's new boyfriend.

The religious and cultural difference is always present and often hilarious. Our Adam, blessed with three sisters and quick to latch onto anything male that comes through the door and identify with it for all he is worth, has decided that Real Men wear yarmulkes. We have had to get him his own to stop him from constantly stealing Binyomin's. The occasional rainy day movie on the VCR is considerably enlivened by Chaya Sara's emphatic editorial comments to the effect that Sleeping Beauty's dress is not *tznius* or that the best part of *Prince of Egypt* is "the bit where Ha-Shem saves the yids and drowns all the goys." This necessitated a stern lecture to my children as soon as their friends had gone home: "Listen, 'yid' is a very special word that only Jews are allowed to use and you must never, ever say it, do you understand?"

The children are allowed in our house because their parents trust that I "get it." I think I do, but still, some amount of vigilance on my part is necessary to ensure that their trust is not betrayed. Batsheva has a liking for rosary beads and has to be routinely frisked before she goes home. I have had to deflect endless arguments along the lines of "Catherine had a banana at my house yesterday so our food is kosher for you, so your food must be kosher for us, so can I have a sandwich please?" The idea that our food isn't kosher, period, not even for us, is rejected as obviously absurd. The only effective explanation on these occasions, I have reluctantly learned from the children themselves, is to say, "That's not for Jews." This is not a phrase that trips easily off the tongue, as may well be imagined, but it is promptly and cheerfully accepted as permitting no appeal.

Besides having the sort of peer group that many modern parents can only dream of, our children are learning all sorts of things from their familiarity with Jewish life. Some of the lessons are essentially the same as those I try to communicate to my students—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are rendered much more interesting than they would be otherwise by virtue of being Moshe Yehuda's great-great-great-great-grandfathers. Our children are bright and curious and very interested in the differences between their lives and their friends' lives, the relationship between church and *shul*, between Jesus and Ha-Shem, between Sunday and *Shabbos*. They discuss it amongst themselves from time to time and come to us for clarification when necessary. Having learned Christianity as a story rather than as a series of propositions, they have no trouble understanding that "they have different rules from us because it reminds us that they were God's friends first. The law is how they are friends with God, and Jesus is how we and everybody else can be His friends." Sometimes they push the point a little: If we are friends of the same God after all, and if Jesus really is God's Son, then why can't we make them Christmas cards? They are contented for the present with a simple, and truthful, "because they would think it was rude," but it's only a matter of time before that is subjected to the inevitable "Why?" When that happens, we will have to decide whether to tackle the question historically or philosophically.

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Even when one has a Ph.D. in theology, it requires a certain amount of delicacy to maintain the finality of God's self-revelation in Christ while at the same time eschewing supersessionism; it is naturally much harder when one is only eight. On the other hand, I'm in no hurry to explain to my open-hearted innocents the historical reasons why anything remotely like proselytism would be offensive to their friends.

However complex the questions and answers may become, they will arise, if they do arise, among friends who have already dealt with heated debates over whose turn it is to go down the slide and who gets to wear the sparkly shoes. There is a great deal of nonsense written on the subject of diversity and multiculturalism, but the fact remains that the great challenge facing our world is that of maintaining clear convictions and strong commitments while living in peaceful proximity with people with different convictions and commitments, avoiding brittle bigotry on the one hand and soggy relativism on the other. If we are to make it into the next century, we need to figure out how to do this, and I cannot imagine a stronger foundation for doing so than the negotiations that are second nature to our children and their friends: "We've got to have lunch now so you have to go home, but can we come to yours after?" "My mom says I have to have a shower now—I'll come back later, but I'll have my *Shabbos* clothes on so we'll have to play inside." "We call it a crèche—I don't think you're supposed to play with the baby because it's Jesus, but the camels and the sheep are probably OK. Are Jews allowed angels?"

For our part, my husband and I feel at home in the Jewish life around us in large part precisely because there is no attempt to deny the extent of the gulf between us and our neighbors, to pretend that we and they are really all the same. Our neighbors are infinitely tolerant of my no-doubt tedious fascination with the details of Torah observance, but they have never attempted to feign interest in what Catholics believe and do. They are both warmly generous in their hospitality and unapologetically clear that all they will accept from us is tap water in a paper cup. My friend cheerfully welcomes my children who are constantly banging on her door and openly discusses with me her acute distress about her sister who is dating a Gentile and whom she will no longer allow in her home. There is none of the painful embarrassment which attends deliberate attempts at cultural sensitivity; nor, ironically, is there any of the suspicion or tension that can mar relationships among our Catholic colleagues, some of whom are inclined to keep a sharp eye on those whom they suspect of being not quite Catholic enough, or altogether too Catholic. Because the boundaries between us and our Orthodox neighbors are so unequivocally clear, they do not spill over into the rest of our dealings; I would no more waste my time with "Are you sure I can't get you a cup of tea?" than they would in trying to gauge my level of loyalty to the Church's magisterium.

The image of Christians as an alien branch engrafted, by the grace of God, into the vine of the Covenant and thus truly of the Chosen People would probably sound thoroughly absurd, at best, to our Jewish friends. For us the image expresses not only a theological proposition subject to analysis and interpretation but also a simple fact of daily life and, as such, it makes perfect sense.

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The Naked Public Square Now

A Symposium

The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America ***by Richard John Neuhaus was published in 1984. Herewith, twenty years later, reflections on the influence of the book and contemporary problems raised by its argument, with a response by Father Neuhaus.***

. . . .

Stanley Hauerwas

I should not like *The Naked Public Square*. After all, the book has little time for "sectarians" who have allegedly given up on the public square. (Indeed it would seem that I should be in favor of the public square's nakedness. If the public square is naked, so much the better if you are a sectarian. Sectarians get to say you should have never trusted the world to underwrite your faith in the first place.) Richard John Neuhaus even claims that the possibility should not be dismissed that Constantinianism was a faithful response of the Church at that "historical moment." He is right, moreover, that Constantinianism had no place for the dichotomy of politics and Christian truth-claims so characteristic of modernity—but then, we sectarians also have little use for that distinction.

Yet despite what some may expect, I do like this sprawling and diffuse book. I like it first of all because, like most of what Neuhaus does, it is so full of energy. Neuhaus reads everything and uses well what he reads. The book exemplifies its main argument by giving robust theological readings of figures such as Dewey and Rawls. As a sectarian, I think the reassertion of strong theological commentary is exactly what we need. I should like to think that from time to time I have followed Neuhaus' example by offering a kind of theological narration of the challenges facing Christians today.

Neuhaus, of course, is quite gracious to sectarians. He indicates that we are an "honorable alternative," a "needed corrective" that calls into question the spineless acquiescence of mainline Protestantism. I must say, however, I am not sure it is a good idea to accept this compliment. Reinhold Niebuhr—a Protestant liberal theologian whose hold on Neuhaus' soul seems permanent—was among the first to compliment those of us committed to Christian nonviolence. We sectarians, however, do not think of ourselves as a "corrective." We think what we say about what it means to be a follower of Jesus is true and, therefore, not simply a reminder to those who responsibly get their hands dirty.

Yet as much as I like *The Naked Public Square*, I continue to be puzzled by people who insist on interpreting Neuhaus as a religious conservative when he is so clearly a Protestant liberal. I quite understand that even though Neuhaus wrote the book as a Lutheran soon to be a Roman Catholic, he admirably left clues throughout the book that his habits of thought are determinatively habits learned at the feet of Protestant liberal theologians. Take, for example, the fundamental claim at the heart of the book, which is "that politics is most importantly a function of culture, and at the heart of culture is religion, whether or not it is called by that name."

Ernst Troeltsch could not have said it better. On second thought, that may not be true: Troeltsch prob-

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ably did say it better. He saw quite clearly that if Christians were to assume the task of forming the ethos of modern societies, the "myths" once thought constitutive of the Christian faith must be rejected or reinterpreted. Reinhold Niebuhr learned that lesson well. Neuhaus, like Troeltsch and Niebuhr, wants Christianity to be both orthodox and the "form" of culture. It is nice work if you can get it, but I remain skeptical that even Richard Neuhaus can pull that rabbit out of the hat. Of course, one of the benefits of assuming the mantle of Troeltsch is you get to call anyone who worries about making Christianity a civilizational religion a "sectarian."

It may be objected that Neuhaus never mentions Troeltsch in *The Naked Public Square*. You do not need to mention Troeltsch when you have at your disposal an updated existential version of Troeltsch—that is, Paul Tillich. The claim that politics is a function of culture, that at the heart of culture is religion, and that religion is meant to serve as a public source of transcendent meaning—this is, as Neuhaus acknowledges, pure Tillich (and Hegel and Plato). Indeed, in the course of the book Neuhaus goes all the way with Tillich, whom he identifies as a "liberal theologian," and underwrites Tillich's claim that America has avoided the unhappy choice between heteronomy and autonomy by being a "theonomous" culture. Therefore America has avoided and can continue to avoid the idolatry called theocracy. This is the basis on which Neuhaus appeals to the religious right to be less combative in the public sphere. The religious right needs to understand that it does not need to use first-order theological language in public when it can appeal to "transcendence"—though in the process the religious right may fail to notice it has accepted the philosophical presuppositions of Protestant liberalism.

Of course, Neuhaus can respond that simply because he uses the modes of thought sponsored by Protestant liberalism, this does not mean that he accepts the Protestant liberal theological program. That may be the case, but I think Neuhaus needs to show how he avoids making theological claims mean something else than what they say. Neuhaus claims, for example, that theology is "the disciplined reflection upon transcendent truth and value that gives significance, perhaps eternal significance, to our lives." But such an account of theology assumes that you know what "transcendence" means prior to knowing what it means for God to have called Israel from the nations. It is interesting, indeed, how little there is about the Church in *The Naked Public Square*. If you have transcendence I guess you really do not need the Church. Perhaps that is why Neuhaus claims that without a "transcendent or religious point of reference, conflicts of values cannot be resolved." But as far as I can tell he never shows us how transcendence *qua* transcendence actually works to resolve "value" conflicts. Surely the problem begins by accepting the language of "values."

The Naked Public Square, of course, is not to be judged by what was said in the book itself. Rather, *The Naked Public Square* is to be judged by the work done by First Things. With *The Naked Public Square* Richard Neuhaus named a challenge before us and as a result located a community of writers and readers ready to meet that challenge. The theological journalism Neuhaus unleashed I believe to be a great good. Along the way, moreover, I have noticed that he has talked less and less about transcendence and more about the Church. I take that to be a great good, but he must be careful. Someone may think he is a sectarian.

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Mary Ann Glendon

In *The Naked Public Square* Richard John Neuhaus charged that the United States, while calling itself a democratic society, was systematically excluding the values of the majority of its citizens from policy decisions. He contended that to rule out of bounds in public life religiously grounded moral viewpoints not only does injustice to America's "incorrigibly religious" citizenry but also saps the very foundations of our democratic experiment. Convinced that the moment had come for men and women of faith to make themselves heard in setting the conditions under which we order our lives together, Neuhaus was heartened by what he saw as the growing political effectiveness of groups that were beginning to do just that. If religious voices in the U.S. today are stronger, more confident, and more adept at translating their values into terms that are persuasive to their fellow citizens, more than a little credit must go to the encouragement and example of Richard John Neuhaus.

Nevertheless, twenty years later, there is limited room in the American public square for conversation, contention, and compromise among a wide variety of moral actors. State-sponsored secularism, legally tightening its control, is ever more openly intolerant of rival belief systems. Despite efforts by some of the country's best lawyers to promote applications of the First Amendment that are respectful of text and tradition, the courts continue to set the establishment and free exer-

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cise provisions at odds with each other, to the detriment of individual and institutional religious freedom. In the 2004 case of *Locke v. Davey* the Supreme Court actually gave its blessing to official religious discrimination, permitting the state of Washington to single out the study of theology for exclusion from a public scholarship program. The current Court majority has pressed forward with a six-decade-long trend of cabining religion in the private sphere while eroding protections of the associations and institutions where religious beliefs and practices are generated, regenerated, nurtured, and transmitted from one generation to the next.

At the state level, too, the outlook for the first of freedoms is bleak. The freedom of religious institutions to govern themselves is under growing assault, as we saw in the 2004 California Supreme Court decision requiring Catholic Charities to provide prescription contraceptive coverage for its employees. Faith-based institutions are facing ever-bolder efforts aimed at forcing them either to compromise their principles or to cease providing alternatives to government-controlled education, health care, housing, and programs for the poor. Attacks on religious freedom in the name of new sexual liberties are increasing. With the judicial nomination process excluding many men and women whose religious or moral beliefs diverge from the secular magisterium, there is little likelihood of a change of direction any time soon.

If present legal trends continue, it is not fanciful to suppose that the situation of religious believers in secular America will come to resemble *dhimmitude*—the status of non-Muslims in a number of Islamic countries. The *dhimmi* is tolerated so long as his religion is kept private and his public acts do not offend the state religion. Naturally, key positions in society must be reserved to those who adhere to the official creed.

Neuhaus' diagnosis of the problem remains valid, but events have not borne out his confidence that a supposedly religious majority could help remedy our circumstances. Perhaps he read more into the polling data about American religious opinions than was really there. Certainly he staked a great deal on the notion that most Americans were still attached in important ways to the Judeo-Christian tradition. No doubt he was right that millions of Americans felt "a powerful resentment against values that they believe have been imposed on them," but were their numbers really greater than the millions who adopted various forms of indifferentism, going along to get along? After all, it's so much easier to get into the public square—or anywhere else one wants to go in American society—if one checks one's religion at the gate, at least those parts of one's religion that do not conform to the dominant ideology. If a majority of Americans are still religious in some sense, how many, one wonders, adhere to religions that assert strong truth claims and make strong demands on their members? And how many are devotees of what Robert Bellah and his associates dubbed "Sheila-ism" after the interviewee who described her entirely private religion as a matter of "listening to her own inner voice"?

Twenty years ago, Neuhaus correctly saw that the chief threat to our republic was not communism (as many thought at the time), but "a collapse of the idea of freedom and of the social arrangements necessary to sustaining liberal democracy." But he seemed reluctant to follow his own analysis to its natural conclusion. Though he mentioned in passing the "lethal liberationisms that reached their apex in the late '60s and early '70s," he did not explore what that social revolution was doing to the cultural foundations of our republic. Though insisting, as did many of the Founders, that our regime of ordered liberty requires certain moral qualities in its citizens and statespersons, Neuhaus held back from pondering the condition of the principal settings where those qualities are acquired. It is now clear that the years of adult "liberation" took a dreadful toll on children, and on the nation's principal seedbeds of character and competence: families and their surrounding communities of memory and mutual aid.

What many Americans now seem to want is for *other people* to be "incorrigibly religious" (or at least to behave as if they were). They want other people to cultivate the self-restraint that makes social life possible, other people to hang in there when family life gets tough, other people to be ethical in business dealings, other people to pay taxes, and other people to provide children with attention and discipline. While Neuhaus was urging free citizens to claim their rightful places in public life, we were becoming a nation of free riders, coasting along and spending social capital that is rapidly running out.

It would not have suited the hortatory, upbeat mood of *The Naked Public Square* to dwell on the state of American culture. The book, after all, was a rallying cry. But on the very last page, Neuhaus observes that the "new thing we are looking for may not come at all. The naked public square may be the last phase of a failed experiment." No doubt he meant that warning as a spur to action. Today, it has a more ominous sound. The American agora, now crowded with jealous idols, awaits a new Paul preaching the unknown God.

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Harvey Cox

When *The Naked Public Square* appeared, it was immediately clear that Richard John Neuhaus and I agreed on a basic premise: that it is wrong to ban religious discourse from the public square just because it is religious. We also agreed, I think, that religious discourse should not be privileged in the public forum. We both wrote and thought (and still do) from our basic religious commitments, but our interpretation of how those commitments should inform our political posture differed considerably, and this made our discussions and debates lively and memorable (at least for me). My religious and theological foundation led me to a somewhat left-of-center politics. I will leave it to Neuhaus to characterize his. I opposed both the Vietnam war and the U.S.-sponsored war against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Neuhaus and I agreed on the former, but (as I recall) disagreed on the latter.

That is all water under the bridge, I suppose, although we as a people still bear the scars of both interventions. When one surveys the current state of the public square, many things have changed, but my (our?) insistence that religious voices—even the ones with which we disagree (or maybe especially those)—do belong in the public square has not wavered.

Today, however, it hardly seems necessary to argue that religion must be allowed a voice in public policy discourse. It is more than evident that the voices of conservative Protestants, Roman Catholic bishops, Jewish leaders, and others are neither excluded nor silenced. Of course, many people still believe that those who actually forge policy are not paying sufficient attention. But that is another matter. If anything, I would say that, on balance, religious opinions are more frequently voiced and heard today in America than they were twenty years ago.

During those years, however, I have become more and more interested in Christianity as a world religion, and this has led me to be careful about making generalizations about religion and public life that might make sense in the United States but not in other countries. For example, Christians in India have just lived through a period of Bharatiya Janata Party government in which a policy of "Hinduization" of the public sphere was an announced aim of the ruling party. True, this objective was greatly watered down after the BJP achieved power and realized both that it had to face elections and that the various religious minorities (including Christians), as well as many Hindus, did not favor their policy. Is it any wonder that Christian leaders in India have been praying for a more secular public square? By "secular," of course, they mean not antireligious but rather a position that is genuinely neutral vis-à-vis the various religious groups in Indian society. Those who hold secularization to be bad in every situation might be puzzled by this "pro-secular" position advocated by Christians. But in India it makes quite a bit of sense.

Meanwhile, in some of the Arab states we have seen a wave of demands for a decidedly more religious public square, one that would be governed by a strict enforcement of shari'a. The intellectuals who nurtured this idea (such as Sayyid Qutb of Egypt) and those who support it today use arguments that sound very similar to those of the most conservative Christian advocates of "Christian America," like the followers of Rousas Rushdoony and the school of "Christian Reconstruction." Many of the advocates of a return to shari'a were imprisoned, tortured, and killed by more secular rulers. Qutb, for example, was murdered on Nasser's orders in an Egyptian prison, a death that pushed the Muslim Brotherhood from its original reformist and educational agenda toward the employment of violence. Qutb is now (mistakenly, I think) referred to as the father of Islamic terrorism.

The debate about "religion in the public square" is still raging in the Muslim world. Indeed, the real goal of such groups as al-Qaeda is primarily to rid majority-Muslim countries of secular rule. As Americans we seem to have been drawn into a struggle that was not initially directed against us.

How should the often significant Christian minorities in majority-Muslim lands respond to this challenge? Palestine is a key example. For Christians there to support Hamas, which envisions a Muslim homeland, seems self-defeating (even though there would certainly be a lot of religion in that public square). To side with Israel is out of the question for them, especially when those Israelis advocating a "Torah state" seem to be gaining ground. This leaves the PLO, which despite its corruption and ineptitude, promises at least a secular alternative in a future Palestinian state. The choice is an anguishing one.

I do not suggest I have any answers to the nettlesome problems sketched above. Yet in a world in which the majority of Christians now live outside the old perimeters of Christendom, they are hardly questions that can safely be ignored.

The Naked Public Square focused mainly on the U.S. Perhaps it is time for Volume Two, which would expand, elaborate, and complicate the thesis for a

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Christian church that lives in a widening variety of circumstances, and for churches that may be able to learn something from the American model but should hardly be expected to emulate it.

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Alan Mittleman

When *The Naked Public Square* was published, I was working for a venerable Jewish organization and was increasingly frustrated by its doctrinaire approach to church-state issues. The organization stood for the strictest separation of church and state, which it justified with incantatory repetitiveness as the best way to ensure that religion could flourish. There is merit in this line of thought, of course, but there are also problems. For one thing, when religiosity did flourish, many of my colleagues seemed scared and discomfited by it. The nation seemed then—and perhaps still seems—to be in the midst of a religious revival, but my colleagues viewed this as a deviation from a settled consensus as to the normative secularity of our public life. Admittedly, the moral majoritarians were hard to love (as Richard John Neuhaus fully displays in his ambivalence toward them). Nonetheless, they betokened a major transformation in the history of religion and society in America, and my organization was ill-suited to do much other than complain about it.

It was Neuhaus in this book who first began to expose for me the limitations of a strictly jurisprudential approach to a profound problem of politics and culture. If you only have a hammer, the saying goes, every problem will look like a nail. Jewish organizations treated all the questions of religion and democracy as if they were legal ones that could be solved by heightening the wall of separation or advocating for free exercise, so long as that exercise did not undermine the almighty wall. Neuhaus taught me that one needs many tools in one's toolbox: law, yes, but also history, social and political theory, and, above all, theology.

There have been many books, both popular and scholarly, written on religion and democracy since 1984, books that address our current dilemmas with erudition, methodological sophistication, and political engagement. The work of Stephen Carter comes to mind. Nonetheless, I am not sure that any of them would merit a twenty-year retrospective, as *The Naked Public Square* surely does. Rereading it, I am struck by the dialectical quality of the author's judgments. Almost every criticism of a position or movement is accompanied by an affirmation of some truth that that position or movement nonetheless preserves. It is not a partisan book; it is filled with both "sympathy and skepticism," as the author writes, toward the persons and phenomena he analyzes. I will leave it to specialists to decide whether this dialectical approach reflects a distinctively Lutheran sensibility. I would say that it reflects Christian moral responsibility—indeed, Christian love. Even at his most disapproving, Neuhaus demonizes no one.

In Neuhaus' view, a public square shorn of respect for divine transcendence will soon fasten onto the ersatz transcendence of Leviathan. Is this view overly apocalyptic? Now that the contest between European totalitarianisms and liberal democracy has been settled (thank God) in favor of the latter, is the fear of a slide toward totalitarianism passé? Indeed, since a religious movement (radical Islamism) and not secular communism or fascism is the defining threat of our time, should we not have more appreciation for a naked or at least lightly clothed public square? I would also say that the substitution of Islamo-fascism for secular totalitarianisms does not challenge Neuhaus' thesis. He wants to preserve democracy against all authoritarianisms, religious and secular. Islamist authoritarianism is as much a totalitarian temptation as was Nazism.

This totalitarian temptation stands in vivid contrast to what Neuhaus calls "critical patriotism." When I first read the book, Neuhaus' argument on behalf of loyalty and love for America coupled with moral judgment was persuasive to me. His basic claim is that only biblical faith can keep faith in the nation from becoming idolatrous and dangerous. Patriotism is a virtue, but only in the proper context: "biblical faith in the universal purposes of God sets the context and limits of patriotism." Patriotism is "critical" because it is suspended "in tension between moral judgment and political allegiance." Patriotism, although it involves love for what is native to us, is not native to us. Love of self, love of tribe, love of locale are all more proximate than love of nation. The sentiments of patriotism must be nurtured. As Walter Berns suggests, if a nation wishes to survive, it must dedicate itself to "making patriots." Neuhaus is aware of this, yet his distancing of the concept of citizen from the concept of patriot is nonetheless disturbing. Following the late Yale constitutional scholar, Alexander Bickel, Neuhaus sees the citizen as a legal abstraction, a sort of Rawlsian

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contractarian, rather than as a real person. "The fatal move," Neuhaus writes, "is in the elevation of the concept of citizen. The concept of citizen is then conflated with and finally swallows the reality of persons." For Neuhaus "citizen" can mean "cipher" (as, he says, "comrade" does in some countries), for it suggests that our rights derive from our status in a state rather than being original attributes of our pre-political personhood.

If we are to speak of rights, I would agree that they attach to our being as persons and not as citizens. But if we are speaking of patriotism, I don't see how we can do so without tying citizenship and patriotism closely together. If we don't do so, then patriotism may devolve into a haze of nationalistic feeling without civic duties and responsibilities.

Neuhaus' rejection of the moral potency of citizenship stems from a concern to root our rights and duties in the real rather than the artificial, in nature rather than custom. It is of a piece, I think, with the wholeness or integration he seeks in the project of re-infusing public life with moral legitimacy derived from biblical faith. But biblical faith also tells us that the world is broken and that, despite our duty to fix what we can of it, there is a great deal that we cannot fix. In such a world, the distinction between artificial and real is a real distinction, as is that between sacred and profane. A naked public square is not, in my view, desirable, but neither is a sacred one. A civil public square, where citizens explore their ultimate and proximate agreements and disagreements with a modicum of respect, *is* desirable. I think that a renewal of confidence in the meaning of citizenship would contribute to that goal rather than detract from it.

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Andrew Murphy

The Naked Public Square was an important book when it was published; it remains an important book twenty years later. In it, Richard John Neuhaus articulated the discontent felt by many culturally conservative Christian Americans, and he articulated that discontent without any illusions about its underdeveloped political and theological nature or its sometimes narrow-minded hostility to outsiders. The questions, problems, and paradoxes explored in the pages of *The Naked Public Square* are not only timeless in large historical terms, but they remain as thorny as ever in this age of faith-based initiatives, welfare reform, sexual politics, and contention over religious language and imagery in courtrooms and classrooms. To my mind, Neuhaus' book offers the most compelling presentation of its kind, a weighty jeremiad for the late twentieth century. (By way of disclaimer, I write as a liberal Episcopalian who believes strongly that a public square that is *somewhat* divested of religion serves an important role in fostering for religious and cultural minorities the very religious liberty that Christian Americans have enjoyed for so long.) There are many ways to enter into dialogue with the book; let me draw out just a few points, by reflecting on three concepts that lie at the heart of Neuhaus' argument.

Democracy. The book captured the sense of exclusion and frustration experienced by large numbers of cultural conservatives, a frustration powered by revulsion at the increasingly radicalized social movements of the 1960s, separationist Supreme Court rulings on church and state, especially after 1963, and the widening distance between the Christian elements present at the nation's founding and the character of America's late twentieth-century culture.

Twenty years on, I wonder how developments in American partisan politics have affected these cultural-moral political divisions. *The Naked Public Square* was written during the first Reagan term, in the wake of evangelical disillusionment with Jimmy Carter's presidency and Democratic control of Congress. Clearly, cultural politics do not fall neatly along partisan lines. But such developments as the emergence of Republican Party control at the congressional and gubernatorial level, increasingly narrow margins on many Supreme Court decisions, an increasingly prominent evangelical presence at the highest levels of Republican Party leadership, and Republican hold on the executive branch for all but eight of the past twenty-four years must surely diminish the sense of alienation among the cultural conservatives that Father Neuhaus chronicled. Provocative events continue to pop up on both sides of the religio-political divide—the Ninth Circuit's "under God" ruling and gay marriage as a stalking-horse for bestiality on the one hand, the latest remarks by Pat Robertson or John Ashcroft or General Boykin on the other. But is it really credible, at this point in the nation's history and considering not only the current administration but Congress and the Supreme Court, for evangelicals to claim that they are shut out from the halls of political power, that their concerns are marginalized and viewed as politically illegitimate? (This is not to claim that evangelical concerns always carry the

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day, only that they receive a serious hearing at the highest levels of government.)

Conversely, shouldn't we remain as concerned as Neuhaus surely was about the antidemocratic nature of the Christian right itself, and note the accounts of mainline Protestant leaders or representatives of the peace churches, who don't even get their calls returned by the current Republican administration? Has the return, or at least the partial return, of religion to the public square since 1984 contributed to advancing democratic civility in American political discourse? I suspect that it has not.

Morality. Liberal, as opposed to majoritarian, democracy is grounded on the idea that there should be limits on the ability of majorities to enact policy, and that those limits have to do with preserving space for the conscientious beliefs of individuals and minority groups. Neuhaus called for a "renewed respect for moral sentiments and their democratic expression in the public arena," especially as it relates to evangelical Christians and cultural conservatives. But such a renewed respect, in real political and legal terms, might well threaten the ability of the adherents of minority religious (or religio-political) groups to achieve a meaningful level of respect for their own moral sentiments in the public arena. Think of Judge Roy Moore's placement of the Ten Commandments in the Alabama courthouse, for example; or legal issues in workplace proselytization, an intriguing and perplexing emergent field of civil rights law. Although the naked public square, or something like it, might certainly be objectionable on several grounds (its free exercise implications for Christian conservatives, its antidemocratic consequences), it might also serve the very purpose of ensuring a "respect for moral sentiments and their democratic expression in the public arena" for minority or marginalized perspectives.

Engagement. One of the most inspiring aspects of the book is its consideration of what it means to be engaged with our fellow citizens. Neuhaus rightly criticizes much fundamentalist biblical prophecy as "alien to the [Christian tradition] in its refusal to engage the Christian message in conversation with public and universal discourse outside the circle of true believers." Later on, he connects compromise with engaged moral action: "To be engaged in a process of compromise is to be engaged as a moral actor." If we have any hope of finding principled, moral compromise regarding the ways in which American citizens draw on their religious values in public debate, something like this notion of engagement and conversation is going to have to reappear in the midst of our increasingly rancorous, increasingly partisan public debate. Twenty-first century American political rancor is a problem for both the left and the right. The rancor of the left, its instinctive repugnance at all things Bush, is matched by the rancor of the right, which too easily equates Bill Clinton and Osama bin Laden.

Choosing engagement over rancor is a tall order, to be sure, but hardly impossible. Considering the vicious personal attacks on such American icons as Jefferson, Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt in their own day, we are surely not in worse shape than we have been at other points of our history. But moving forward will require a healthy dose of humility and charity from all sides. To take the notion of engagement as seriously as Neuhaus' book demands, we might be required to see the public square as not only reflecting the nation's diverse faith commitments but also as itself requiring a leap of faith in which we bring our deepest (and divergent) values to a vibrant political debate without any guarantee that our side will win on any particular issue. Perhaps it is not simply a "clothed" public square for which we should be aiming but a coat of many colors.

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Jean Bethke Elshtain

Some critics of Richard John Neuhaus' discourse-altering book claim that the public square has never been naked. Others say that it is naked and must continue to be, and that it's a damn good thing, too. The first group insists that Neuhaus wanted to fill the public square with confessional talk—which, of course, is out of bounds in a society whose public square has always worn the decent garments of democratic civility, evidently not the garb that Neuhaus favors. The second group accepts and even celebrates a naked public square because it believes that the comprehensive worldviews of citizens—and religion is nothing if not a comprehensive worldview—have no proper place in a secular constitutional republic. These analysts press arguments often derived from the work of the late, great John Rawls, and insist that, should arguments derived from religious convictions enter the public square, they must be wearing secular garb. This, they say, is the requirement to which Neuhaus objected, and if this makes the public square naked, so be it.

The first criticism is clearly wrong and I shall spend no time on it. The second is more plausible, but it is a radical distortion of what really goes on in American civil society. Our public square has always been filled with arguments of all sorts. What Neuhaus rightly

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warned us about twenty years ago were trends in jurisprudential thought, Supreme Court decisions, and political philosophy that were combining to strip the public square of religiously derived moral and ethical concerns. Many of these moves could correctly be interpreted as an effort to make invisible to public life the religious faith that animates the majority of American citizens.

As Neuhaus saw, this effort was propelled by what might be called, at best, a mistaken assumption—the assumption that because the United States does indeed have a secular government, it therefore is and always has been a secular civil society. The trends Neuhaus criticized aimed at mapping civil society along the lines of church-state separation, and such mapping could only have the effect of seriously distorting our picture of American civil society. Many of us have written about this at some length over the past fifteen or twenty years but reminders are always in order. One might point to all those great public citizens over the years who spearheaded movements for social reform squarely within a framework of religious belief. Martin Luther King is inevitably cited here, but there are many others. This is an entirely appropriate move to make, although it has become rather predictable. Do we want to silence someone such as King because our academic and legal elites hate Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson? The answer, surely, is No: that would be far too high a price to pay.

There is another, more fruitful way to move, and that is to examine in depth the role that faith has played in shaping American civil society as such. We know from empirical studies of the last decade that regular church attendees are more likely to be involved as good citizens in their communities. No surprise there. What is harder to get at because it is largely invisible to us is the crucial part that faith plays in what Alexis de Tocqueville called shaping and forming the passions and turning them into self-interest rightly understood. Such self-interest aims not only at an individual's good but also at a common good, because the self that is "interested" is a moral self. That moral self emerges in large part because of the way that faith tames and shapes moral sensibilities, insofar as faith remains sufficiently robust.

That said, one should never employ Tocqueville in these discussions as if he were an unabashed celebrant of American democracy. He was not. He noted certain unfortunate, even dismal, tendencies that might be played out—trends that isolate us within the entropic vortex of an autonomous self. Tocqueville limned a world of such isolated and isolating selves, and the enhanced control they would demand "from the top" as civil society faded. He called it "democratic despotism." Whether or not we would want to use this term, we must acknowledge the phenomenon and admit that it is worrisome. Many of us have fretted publicly about such trends—I did so myself in a book called *Democracy on Trial* (1995). I don't think that American democracy was then or is now best captured within the gloomy scenario Tocqueville sketched—no more than I think that Neuhaus believed the American public square was stripped entirely naked. But Neuhaus' book sounded a needed alarm that in the past two decades has been echoed in many quarters—an alarm about where we were going and what would happen if certain claims and trends went unchallenged. For this reason and many others, we owe Neuhaus a debt. His book forced many of us to consider afresh our own positions and those of others. *The Naked Public Square* generated a serious debate about democratic discourse and the role of religion in that discourse, and this debate continues to the present moment. Indeed, so vigorous was that discussion that Rawls himself partially (but only partially) revised his view on where religion might fit in American political debate.

Many still suspect that anytime someone speaks from faith his or her speech is bound to be self-referential and beyond reasoned debate. This is clearly wrong but it is a widespread apprehension—and a peculiar one, too, in a popular culture that celebrates and sells self-referentiality. Religious faith, in fact, has quite a different effect on the public life of citizens. Faith calls people out of themselves and compels them to think of common goods and higher goods. Neuhaus reminded all of us of that inescapable fact.

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Ralph C. Wood

Very few of us want to be held accountable for everything—not even for most of the things!—we said or did or believed twenty years ago. In 1984 I was still a naïve Kierkegaardian who had not yet seen the wisdom of Kierkegaard's warning that he was a corrective rather than an answer. Kierkegaard's caveat about his own work may also apply to Richard John Neuhaus' provocative book of two decades past. *The Naked Public Square* was a splendidly admonitory but insufficiently remedial book.

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Like no one else before him, Neuhaus revealed that the rise of the new religious right was an almost perfect mirror-image response to the decline of the old religious left. Both sides wrongly assumed, Neuhaus showed, that "there is a core consensus on what is moral," a common set of premises that both believers and nonbelievers can agree on. This shared world of moral discourse had already ceased to exist by 1984. Liberal and conservative Christians alike had denuded the public realm—the open places where the vexing ethical questions are adjudicated—of serious religious argument.

Mainline Protestants had retreated into a civil religion devoid of any distinctively Christian content, as the pronouncements of the National Council of Churches became virtually identical to those of the American Civil Liberties Union. The newly resurgent fundamentalists seemed to be their proper scourge, but they, too, had abandoned the public arena by retreating into a privatized morality and an individualist theology. Preachers are meant to be soul winners, Jerry Falwell had declared, not social reformers. Each camp, Neuhaus demonstrated, had abandoned those large moral sentiments and deep religious traditions that once shaped American life. They had both promoted, albeit unintentionally, the newly regnant equation of public with secular. Abortion provided Neuhaus an apt illustration: religious arguments about the nature of the human person and the origin of human life had been excluded from the American courts. Hence his dire declaration: "The result, quite literally, is *the outlawing of the basis of law*."

In calling for a religious alternative to both fiery fundamentalism and spineless liberalism, Neuhaus was surely right. Yet the two intervening decades have not been kind to his proposed solution. He urged Christians on both the left and the right to provide "moral legitimacy for democracy in America." Over and again, he implored believers to "devise forms of that interaction which would revive rather than destroy liberal democracy," to offer leadership that would "influence the social order," and thus to "restore the role of religion in helping to give moral definition and direction to American public life and policy."

For Neuhaus, the values that undergird the American democratic project were clear: "a near obsession with civil liberties, a relatively open market economy, the aspiration toward equality of opportunity, a commitment to an institutionalized balancing of powers and countervailing forces, and a readiness to defend this kind of social experiment, if necessary, by military force." So essential are these liberal democratic principles—not only for American life but for human existence itself—that Neuhaus called unabashedly for the reconstruction of a "sacred canopy," a holy covering to provide the American experiment its divine legitimacy.

Though already identified as a leading neoconservative thinker, Neuhaus still took his bearings from liberal theologians: from Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, David Tracy and Wolfhart Pannenberg. Thus did we find Neuhaus resorting, like them, to nontheological language in order to demonstrate that religious concerns could be brought to bear on public matters. Repeatedly, therefore, he called for a recovery of "ultimacy" and "transcendence," for the construction of a "theonomous society," declaring that "even less orthodox Christians can assert some kind of cosmic order—maybe even divine order—to which human affairs ought to be accountable."

To be blunt: the strategy did not work. Neither believers nor unbelievers, whether on the left or the right, agreed to meet on the allegedly common ground of ultimacy and transcendence and cosmic order. A religiously grounded democracy did not develop. Something far more radical was required to answer the crisis that Neuhaus had so acutely identified. His conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1990 was the most obvious evidence of his new ecclesial and confessional response to the calamity at hand. Holy Scripture and papal encyclicals became Neuhaus' chief points of reference for addressing the broken world. The Church needed to get its own house in order, he rightly saw, if it were to help turn our nihilistic culture from death to life. "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," the remarkable 1994 document authored principally by Neuhaus and Charles Colson, offered a joint vision of the ecumenical Church as the people of God called to evangelize the world and to bear the cross.

Yet it was an intramural crisis at First Things that most clearly disclosed how far Neuhaus had traveled from his book of 1984. In a 1996 editorial written to introduce a symposium on the judicial usurpation of politics, Neuhaus decried the federal courts' invention of previously unrecognized constitutional rights in deciding cases that dealt, for instance, with abortion and euthanasia. Such a judicial foreclosing of legislative debate, including the rejection of all theological claims about these deeply contested moral issues, prompted Neuhaus to ask an apocalyptic question. The question was no longer whether American democratic liberalism could be religiously sustained; it was whether we are now witnessing "the end of democracy," and thus "whether we have reached or are reaching the point where conscientious citizens can no longer give moral assent to the existing regime."

The outraged response was widespread and was not limited to Neuhaus' enemies. Peter Berger and

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Gertrude Himmelfarb immediately resigned from the editorial board of FIRST THINGS. That the former is a neoliberal and the latter a neoconservative validates Neuhaus' original thesis of 1984—that left and right, for all their apparent opposition, remain essentially akin. Yet a drastic new thing has emerged: the public square is no longer naked, not at least for that large public represented by Berger and Himmelfarb. For them, it is now evident, the emptiness has been filled by the one earthly good that possesses true ultimacy—the American democratic project. For Neuhaus, it has become equally evident, the Body of Christ alone commands our final loyalty.

Obedience to the God who embodies Himself in the worldly community called the Church is especially important when the prime political problem is not judicial usurpation but a far more sinister evil. Now, it has become clear, Christians face a much larger vexation, one that Neuhaus had barely mentioned in 1984—the malign prospect of *democratic* totalitarianism. When the majority is willing to give political license to abortion and euthanasia, or (I would add) to both militarism and materialism, then democracy itself becomes despotic. "Majority rule," as Neuhaus noted in the early pages of his book, "is no sure guarantee of freedom." The Church is the one warrant for lasting liberty, Richard John Neuhaus still teaches us, when it forms a people who best serve the nation-state by living according to the virtues that St. Augustine described as "ordered love."

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Allen D. Hertzke

The Naked Public Square appeared at a propitious moment for me. In 1984 I was beginning my third year of doctoral studies, and Richard John Neuhaus' book provided a theoretical anchor for my exploration of how religious lobbies were attempting to clothe the public square with faith-rooted policies and arguments. Rereading it today, I am struck by how well it has worn. It remains, in fact, all too relevant. On the negative side, Neuhaus' analysis of how Christian mainline leaders who once anchored public religion in America were sidelining themselves by aligning with forces hostile to faith still illuminates our contemporary scene. More positively, his challenge to evangelical leaders to develop a theologically rooted public witness has begun, if haltingly, to be addressed. Some have taken to heart his warning that the public square abhors a vacuum, and that the American state would tend to fill it up, crowding out religious values and intruding upon the mediating institutions of civil society.

In 1984 Neuhaus criticized a federal judiciary that was increasingly unrestrained by either clear constitutional interpretation or natural law. The results of this lack of restraint are evident today in the way that judicial decisions have short-circuited democracy, fostered polarization, and weakened the system's legitimacy. On such issues as pornography, abortion, and religious freedom, the courts have rendered sweeping verdicts that effectively disenfranchise the views of millions of citizens and their elected representatives. The Supreme Court claims to have resolved the issue of abortion three decades ago, but society has been roiled by it ever since. Now we see the possibility that the judiciary could redefine marriage without the consent of the citizenry.

Whatever the merits of gay marriage might be, its imposition by the courts would represent a judicially engineered social revolution that would exacerbate divisions in America and imperil our ability to do politics together as citizens. Politics in a democracy is about how we organize our collective life together, through a process of contestation and negotiation in which deeply held popular sentiment is taken into account. Cheap victories granted by judicial fiat short-circuit that process.

My populist reproach of "judicial supremacy" relates to a wider concern about forces that undermine our capacity to shape a wholesome and just society, and leads me to my principal criticism of *The Naked Public Square*. Focused as it was on the constellation of law, politics, elite opinion, and education, the book skirted a powerful secularizing and hedonic force: modern capitalism. While social conservatives castigate the overweening state for undermining "traditional morality," they have not faced the other profound source of their angst: the way the materialistic values of the marketplace increasingly seep into every nook and cranny of American life. Christian traditionalists have good reason to be unhappy with society today; as every parent knows, popular culture and peer influences, driven by consumerism and entertainment, are among the most powerful forces undermining the transmission of religious faith, traditional sexual ethics, and respect for elders. Capitalist values, given free rein, are not only at odds with a true Christian culture but also undermine even a secular human solidarity.

This note of caution about the atomizing tendencies of liberal capitalism runs through Catholic social teaching, from *Rerum Novarum* to *Centesimus*

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Annus. This is one reason why Neuhaus had good grounds to suggest twenty years ago that the "Catholic moment" in American democracy had arrived. The Catholicism of Leo XIII and John Paul II, of Jacques Maritain, Yves Simon, and John Courtney Murray, of Christian Democracy and *Dignitatis Humanae*, seems to offer a counterweight to both statist collectivism and atomistic liberalism.

Today there are inklings of this potential, signs of appreciation for what Pope John Paul II has called "a Christian anthropology" of human persons naturally embedded in families and communities that, under the doctrine of subsidiarity, must be supported, not supplanted, by the state. That has been the rhetoric and to a degree the thrust of the Bush administration's faith-based initiative (which sadly has been undercut by its tax policies). But Catholic social teaching, even as it embraces private property and the market, still carries a radical message about the injustice that flows from purely market rewards based on vastly unequal opportunities and abilities—not problems that we hear a lot about from the Republican Party today.

In their heyday, Christian Democratic parties in Europe, drawing on Catholic social teaching, sought to address this injustice without supplanting subsidiary institutions. They promoted a social capitalism by emphasizing social duties to weaker persons, the need for living wages, and bargaining power for workers. But unlike socialists, they subsidized families, communities, social groups, even religious schools, rather than replacing them with statist institutions.

America lamentably lacks a Christian Democratic tradition, and in the past two or three decades the opportunity to create one may have been missed. Judicial fiat in *Roe v. Wade* and its progeny, and the failure of church leadership, have combined to dissolve the "Catholic moment" that might have fostered this tradition. As a result, a number of citizens are politically orphaned. Pro-life voters who feel that President Bush demonstrated dangerous hubris in going to war in Iraq have no easy way to register that sentiment. Do they protest by voting for John Kerry, who resists action even to protect the almost-born? What about those who support school vouchers and faith-based initiatives but genuinely feel that Bush's economic policies have undermined the social fabric by aggravating inequalities, burdening our children with debt, and imposing hardships on struggling families?

The Christian Democratic tradition offers a home to such voters and an antidote to corrosive polarization. Perhaps the Republican Party under Teddy Roosevelt and the Democratic Party under Franklin Roosevelt approximated such an ideal, because both exercised democratic power on behalf of the weaker while respecting the institutions of church and family. But as I survey the configuration of the two parties today, I do not see such a prospect on the horizon.

Rereading Neuhaus' incisive book thus reminds us vividly of what American public life might have been and, we can pray, of what it still might become.

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David Novak

The publication of *The Naked Public Square* provided religious Americans with a thoughtful support in their struggle against the cultural elites in this country, who have been attempting (with growing and alarming success) to remove any religious influence from public life. Since religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are probably the most public phenomena in the world, to deny them public influence is to condemn them to public insignificance, even for the members of their own communities, let alone for the larger society. But Neuhaus showed how religious citizens can make their case—especially on questions of public morality—without succumbing to the type of "mainline" religion that merely endorses whatever secularism is socially powerful at the time, and without retreating into the type of sectarianism that assumes that religious and political commitments are not only separate but essentially opposed.

Neuhaus' great book has not only informed many religious individuals, it has launched a thriving interreligious intellectual community, as evidenced by the authors and readers of First Things. That is surely good cause for celebration—and for further reflection. Now we need to consider how *The Naked Public Square* has launched Richard John Neuhaus in his own subsequent project, a project that has included at various points many like-minded persons. That project is marked by two great transitions in Neuhaus' life since 1984: the first and most important is his becoming a Roman Catholic (indeed, a Roman Catholic priest); the second is what must be seen as his growing American nationalism.

By becoming a Catholic, Neuhaus has been better able to access the richness of the Catholic intellectual

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tradition, especially its tradition of natural law thinking. That is quite important for Neuhaus since he represents himself in public as a social critic, and the affirmation of natural law is that aspect of the Catholic intellectual tradition which has the most immediate social significance. Thus in 1984, when still a Lutheran, Neuhaus wrote about "moral judgments and intuitions [being] inseparable from religious belief." But that still left his readers somewhat unsure as to how he would distinguish religiously inspired moral advocacy in a secular polity from advocacy of a particular revelation and the norms directly commanded through it. By his accession to the tradition of natural law thinking, Neuhaus has been better able to promote moral positions that the Catholic Church recognizes as claiming all humans, and to distinguish them from moral positions the Catholic Church can only require of its own members. (It is the task of Catholic theologians like Neuhaus to show more precisely the logical relation between revelation and more general natural law in their tradition.) On the issue of abortion, especially, Neuhaus' natural law thinking has made him much more effective in developing a pro-life consensus with Protestants and Jews, and even with some who are not members of any faith or religious community.

I must, however, express some concern with Neuhaus' growing nationalism, especially his recent tendency to employ the theological concept of election to describe the United States of America as "an almost chosen people." The public morality advocated by the American government, and especially by President George W. Bush and his administration, might well put America in the forefront of both the local and international struggle for authentic human rights. Nevertheless, "chosenness" is the preserve of those peoples, like the Jewish people and the Christian Church, who see themselves as having been elected by God. There is a fundamental difference between a community whose immediate warrant comes from a transcendent source ("I am the Lord your God") and a nation whose immediate warrant comes from an interhuman agreement ("We the people of the United States"). Only the Jewish people and the Christian Church, because of the testimony of the revelations they affirm and transmit, can claim to be chosen. (I am told that Islam has no such concept of covenantal election.) But for any humanly instituted society—even one as noble as the United States—to be seen as chosen seems to require that it be taken as an extension of some historical revelation, indeed the leading extension of some particular faith community. Yet in *The Naked Public Square*, Neuhaus warned us about "national hubris." Unlike a chosen people, even a humanly instituted society as good as the United States cannot make any special claims on God.

I take Neuhaus' warning about national hubris to mean that our mundane commitment to any humanly invented society need only be consistent with our ultimate commitment to God. That is the God who has revealed to us both our beginning and our end, and how we might humbly do our commanded tasks in between, including the task of conducting our society justly both at home and abroad. But no humanly invented society can claim any direct derivation from that revelation. To do so is to engage in a political triumphalism that most Christians have eschewed even for their own churches, let alone for the polities in which they are the majority. (Surely, "Christendom" is no longer the project of the Catholic Church. George Weigel has argued this point in FIRST THINGS; see "Papacy and Power," February 2001.)

Our respective revelations, then, can only permit our participation in what could very well be the best human society to appear so far in history. Those living according to these revelations can even invoke God's blessing on such a society. But no one ought to claim to be able to deliver God's specific endorsement to any such society, let alone give it the cosmic significance of being chosen by the Maker of heaven and earth. And only a chosen people can be assured that it will survive even into the world-yet-to-come (see Isaiah 54:10; 60:2). All other societies are as mortal as the humans who have made them. We can certainly hope for God's favorable judgment on our human society. But that judgment lies ahead of us, not behind us. Thus theologians should call for national humility in place of the hubris of any nationalism. Indeed, such political humility enables theologians to exercise unique social criticism, both positive and negative, of any and all earthly powers.

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Wilfred M. McClay

The Naked Public Square has been an enormously influential work, surely one of the most significant books published in this country during the past quarter-century, and a book whose momentum is far from being spent. One measure of its enduring potency is that so much of it is still worth arguing with, precisely because so little of it has been superseded by events. This is no period piece.

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That does not mean that it has always been adequately understood, even though its title has become shorthand in the discourse of educated people. Having a memorably evocative title that becomes a tagline may look like a nice problem to have, but the risk is that such a book may become fixed in the public mind in some stereotypical or capsulized form. Your argument may be passed around far and wide, but sealed inside a membrane of presumed familiarity.

To reread *The Naked Public Square* on its twentieth anniversary is to discover that it is not quite the book we remember, or think we remember, or somehow "know about." It is a far richer, subtler, more nuanced work, at once bold and tentative, defying easy summation, with no easy party-line reassurances to offer any of the combatants in our culture wars. Its perspective is lofty and its intellectual reach is long, yet it also crackles with insight into the nitty-gritty particulars of American politics and culture. Its wide scope was not achieved at the expense of a secure grounding in the specificities of time and place. In this way, as in many other ways, reading Richard John Neuhaus is not much like reading John Dewey.

Indeed, whether he meant to or not, Neuhaus produced a book that vividly recalls the intellectual ferment of the time in which it was written, a time of sober second thoughts about the inherent limitations of the standard liberal-progressive project. This era of reconsideration is certainly related to the rise of what was called "neoconservatism," and more generally to an awareness of the limits of national social policy, the failures of national-scale command economies, and the hubris entailed in the progressive movement's embrace of a top-down rationally engineered secular society governed by experts. Neuhaus' 1976 book *To Empower People*, co-authored with Peter Berger, played a key role in turning intellectual attention toward the role of small-scale mediating institutions, very much including the nation's churches and synagogues, as wellsprings of inventiveness and virtue in American public life.

For Neuhaus in this period, the task at hand was to decouple liberal democracy from the iron logic of secularization, and the goal was to recover for public use an insight that was apparent to most of the Founders of the American republic—that the health of democratic institutions depends as much on the free and vibrant public presence of the biblical religions, and their culture-forming influence, as it does on the constraints placed on that religion's ability to exercise direct political power.

A right understanding of Neuhaus' argument needs to balance both sides of this formulation. In other words, our choices should not be restricted—and in the end *cannot* be restricted—to either the complete privatization of religion or the complete integration of church and state. The separation of church and state is not, and cannot be, absolute, and it does not, and cannot, require the segregation of religion from public life. This is a complicated argument, and its working-out in public policy is bound to be complicated too. But it is a direct challenge to the idea that a commitment to official secularism as national policy is the logical, nay, inevitable, consequence of our commitment to liberal democracy. That, I believe, is the key insight of the book, and it stands as much in need of explanation and articulation today as it did twenty years ago.

One query that the book provokes, in retrospect, is whether the author (like many other commentators on religion and politics) was too hard on Protestant fundamentalism. It seems to me that the intensity of the suspicion directed toward Protestant fundamentalists has always been disproportionate to any dangers they pose. It is evident that among these Christians there has been a deepening of the understanding of the rules of civic engagement, including the commitment to "public reason" and rational, respectful debate that Neuhaus rightly prescribed. It may well be the case that this book, and Neuhaus' subsequent ecumenical efforts, have a lot to do with that welcome evolution.

Though some particulars have changed, one thing has changed very little since 1984: the naked public square against which Neuhaus warned us remains a genuine possibility. The Supreme Court recently declined to remove "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, but it merely postponed the issue by ruling on narrow technical grounds. The issue will be back, and the outcome is far from certain. Mainstream American public discourse may have become more comfortable with the idea that liberal democracy depends, in some remote way, on the culture-forming influence of religion. But it is still very uncomfortable when the discourse moves beyond rather bare abstraction.

Today we are in an era in which the process of manufacturing human beings strictly for medical and quasi-medical uses is not science fiction but rather a potential industry with which major universities and corporations are eager to associate themselves. When the concept of "transhumanity" is a topic of serious discussion, that erstwhile common ground between religious citizens and secular citizens is rapidly eroding. Why should we accept the notion of inherent human dignity unless we have some religious reason for doing so? Why should we continue to accept the

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notion of inherent human limitations such as debility and death? Why forgo the enhancements of strength, agility, intelligence, and sexual prowess that might be entailed in comprehensively remaking ourselves? Can "public reason" provide a resolution of these matters, without invoking—or negating—specifically religious assertions?

These are large questions that go to the heart of our personal and public lives. As I watch the gap widening between the proponents and opponents of federally funded embryonic stem-cell research—a seemingly smaller issue that ought to be relatively easy to resolve—it seems to me less and less likely that those larger questions can be resolved by the democratic process without our having to make a hard and unpalatable choice between two mutually exclusive faiths. I hope I am wrong. But this is the possibility that haunts me as I reread in the twenty-first century *The Naked Public Square*.

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Richard John Neuhaus

An adequate response to such thoughtful contributions would result in the second volume that some say is required. Here I can only indicate a few points that a more adequate response would address. For the first time since its publication in 1984, I reread the book cover to cover in preparation for this symposium and other academic events marking the twentieth anniversary. It was not an embarrassing experience, although I did cringe at the prolixity and repetitiveness. And to be sure, I would now say some things differently, as well as some different things.

Stanley Hauerwas and I have been debating these questions for more than twenty years. I read that he and his followers have now launched something called the Ekklesia Project. Having a church is important. Jesus and his followers launched one some two millennia ago. Hauerwas' sectarianism, and I do think that is the right word, has left him now without a country and without a church, or at least without a country whose claim to his allegiance he accepts and without a church not of his own theological invention. The ecclesial sectarianism is much more debilitating than the political, but both have a strong bearing on our disagreements over the years. Hauerwas is right in saying that I was and am a liberal in my devotion to liberal democracy, which is the only decent politics on offer in the contemporary world. And of course I was a Protestant when I wrote the book, albeit a Protestant of catholic and Catholic proclivities. The likes of Niebuhr and Tillich were the available referents for making the argument at that time to the audience I was trying to persuade.

Today I would more emphatically take my stand with Augustine and his *City of God*, especially Book XIX. As Augustine viewed the Roman Empire, so I, mutatis mutandis (admitting the differences are great), view liberal democracy. Although it is of the city of man and is characterized by disordered love and the lust for power (*libido dominandi*), it is deserving of our qualified allegiance, support, and remedial efforts. Such is the circumstance not of our choosing short of the promised triumph of the City of God. Hauerwas is also right that my book too often appeals to a sometimes ambiguous "transcendence." Today I would make the appeal more explicitly and insistently to the human capacity for reason, including moral reason. Natural law enters here, but somebody has to come up with a better term than natural law, which is too easily seen as a peculiarly Catholic thing. In these brief responses to Hauerwas, I have anticipated my response to some of the other contributors, so most of them will be briefer still.

Mary Ann Glendon is right about the "official creed" imposed chiefly by the judiciary. I agree also on the prospect of *dhimmitude* and the indifference of most Christians in this still culturally Christian land. I do not intend to be "upbeat," but the game ain't over until it's over. Like Paul at Athens, we do preach the unknown God, and do so in the hope that many would worship Him if they knew His name. For this society, Christians seek to provide direction, or at least influence. Worse come to worst, we can only bear bold witness, perhaps very costly witness. It is the cost of discipleship. It is not a matter of calculating the odds. It is a matter of simple duty. As Mary Ann Glendon knows, and exemplifies.

I continue to be grateful to Harvey Cox for his

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favorable review in the *New York Times Book Review* when the book appeared. That helped. He is right that "religious opinions are more frequently voiced" today, but I am not at all sure they are "heard." They are reported but generally viewed as being, in Jean Elshtain's phrase, "beyond reasoned discourse." The point of the book was not that religion should have a larger voice. The book was a plea not for religion as such but for reasoned public moral discourse, which discourse must also and of necessity draw on the resources of religion. Cox is right about the challenge of other world religions, most particularly Islam. But the liberal democratic tradition is a Western and Christian achievement and its future depends, for better and for worse, chiefly on the American experiment. If it dies here, I do not see anyone else picking up the fallen flag.

I agree with Alan Mittleman on the limits of the jurisprudential (if only we could convince the jurists!) and the centrality of theology. I appreciate his underscoring the irenic intention and tone of the book, since many complain it is too polemical. Serious Jews and Christians must strive to elicit from others their most foundational presuppositions, whether or not they are willing to call it their theology. Yes, there needs to be education in "civic duties and responsibilities," but I will not, for reasons stated in the book, give up my reservations about "citizen" as a controlling public identity. And yes, as I have had to explain times beyond numbering, the alternative to the naked public square is not the sacred public square but the civil public square.

Andrew Murphy observes that some of the religiously committed are now in power and tend to exclude opponents who are also religiously committed. That is, in part, the nature of partisan politics. But there is no reason why people who have demonized this administration, condemning it root and branch, should expect to have their calls returned. People are not inclined to take advice from their declared enemies. As to the Ten Commandments, they may offend the "moral sentiments" of some, but feeling offended does not (pace Sandra Day O'Connor) entitle one to a veto over how a society gives public expression to its beliefs and ideals. Democracy is about more than majority rule, but it is also and inescapably about majority rule. The Ten Commandments are closely related to the reason why the majority is committed to protecting minorities, and minorities are very foolish to protest the public affirmation of their surest sources of defense. Yes, while taking sides, we must cultivate the humility and charity that can, at least we must hope, replace rancor with engagement in a vibrant politics marked by the awareness that compromise need not be morally compromising.

Jean Elshtain correctly notes the contribution of the late—and I join her in saying great—John Rawls who, however much we disagreed with him, did much to revive intellectual interest in political philosophy. He sought to address, if I may be permitted the phrase, first things. Elshtain stresses the necessary connection between faith and reason, to which I would add that "reasoned debate" requires a more honest engagement of reasoned faith, recognizing that we are all, the most militant secularist included, people of faith, albeit different faiths. On another point, and not disagreeing with Elshtain, Tocqueville's "democratic despotism" was not a warning against raw majoritarianism but against an apolitical majority supinely surrendering rule to elite minorities, which is, to a very significant extent, our present circumstance.

I'm no Kierkegaard (see my "Kierkegaard for Grownups" in the October issue), but I won't quarrel with Ralph Wood's judgment that my book was intended as a corrective. Yet there was also a remedy proposed, and Wood says it has failed. I would prefer to say it has not been tried, but I admit that that may be something like failing. He says "something far more radical was required," and relates that to my becoming a Catholic. It is true that, as a Catholic, my thinking and public argument are more firmly secured in a tradition that runs from the Bible through *City of God* and up to the 1991 encyclical on the free and just society, *Centesimus Annus*. But the something far more radical was there all along. In 1981, before I started writing the book and almost a decade before I became a Catholic, I wrote the founding statement of the Institute on Religion and Democracy. It began with this: "Jesus Christ is Lord. That is the first and final assertion Christians make about all of reality, including politics. Believers now assert by faith what one day will be manifest to the sight of all: every earthly sovereignty is subordinate to the sovereignty of Jesus Christ." Admittedly, that assertion was not as pronounced in the book. I was trying not to frighten those from whom I wanted to elicit a reasoned and public discussion of their foundational beliefs about how we ought to order our life together. That may have been naïve. With few exceptions, they did not reciprocate my interest in such a discussion. In any event, Ralph Wood and I are united in the conviction that the Church is the indispensable fact in forming and sustaining the virtues that issue from, as Augustine put it, rightly ordered love.

In response to Allen Hertzke, I did not know then

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and do not know now precisely how to check the cultural and moral ravages of unbridled capitalism. The tradition of Catholic social doctrine to which he alludes provides the best available way of thinking about these problems. In containing and maybe reversing such ravages, we should not give up on the legal possibilities of what some call censorship but is more accurately described as an effort to maintain or restore a measure of public decency. I am heartened by the growth of home schooling, and we must relentlessly press for parental choice in education through vouchers and other means. These should not be viewed as withdrawal from the public square but as the positing of real alternatives in the public square. I share Hertzke's respect for the Christian Democratic project, which was mainly European and Catholic, and posited against a powerful anticlerical or laicist tradition. Until half a century ago, when the Protestant cultural hegemony was still in place, something very much like Christian Democracy flourished in this country under the auspices of both major parties and with the full participation of Catholics and Jews. Back then, Father John Courtney Murray argued that, after establishment Protesantism lost the will for it, Catholics and Catholic social doctrine might come to the rescue of that Christian and democratic order. That thesis was part, although by no means the most important part, of my *The Catholic Moment*. The prospect of that happening looks rather bleak, but the effort, now in growing alliance with evangelical Protestants, still claims my allegiance.

My friend David Novak puzzles me with his anxiety about my increasing "nationalism." In 1975, I published *Time Toward Home: The American Experiment as Revelation* in which I contended for a more covenantal rather than exclusively contractual version of the American founding, while carefully specifying all that Novak says about not confusing America with the covenanted communities of Israel and the Church. *Time* magazine did a spread on the book, lifting up my statement, "When I meet God, I expect to meet Him as an American." That is emphatically not the most important part of my identity, but it is part of all for which I am accountable to God. There is wisdom in Lincoln's saying that America is an "almost chosen people," as long as we doubly underline the "almost." With the Founders, with David Novak, and with all who decline to think that God has absented Himself from His world, I do believe in Providence, and am sure that His purposes, His judgment, and His mercy extend to the important part of the world that is the United States of America. This induces the opposite of national hubris, which is humility—as in a nation that is "under God."

Yes to Wilfred McClay who writes that we should not and *cannot* restrict our choices to the complete privatization of religion or the complete integration of church and state. Our purpose must be to revive authentic politics, which is the deliberation, necessarily including moral deliberation, of how we ought to order our life together. And yes, I probably was too hard on fundamentalists, who are now, with exceptions, called evangelicals. In assuring my intended readers that I understood their prejudices, I may have inadvertently given the impression that I shared their prejudices. In the past two decades, evangelicals have become much more effective in making moral arguments in a way that renews, and in no way threatens, the democratic discourse of authentic politics. McClay touches on the chilling reality of developments in biomedical technology and eugenics. Can the inherent dignity and necessary limits of the *humanum* be defended without recourse to truths dependent upon biblical faith? I am skeptical, but the answer to that question is up to those who subscribe to other faiths. If it is left to the vulgar utilitarians who are now largely in charge of those developments, we will of a certainty continue our descent into Huxley's brave new world. It may be that the only answer of sufficient intellectual coherence and popular force to prevent that tragedy is an answer derived from biblical faith. In which case, we will have to turn a deaf ear to protests about imposing religion upon the public square and do all that is possible to rally the democratic majority, which may turn out to be not enough. Like McClay, I continue to be haunted by unpalatable possibilities posed by *The Naked Public Square*.

Much more might be said in response to such thoughtful reflections, but I will stop here. I have written at precisely twice the length allotted each contributor, to all of whom I am indebted for their generosity and criticism. Were I to claim more space, they might accuse me of being unfair, even undemocratic. FT

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What Good Is It That Girls Need Never Go To War?

What good is it that girls need never go to war
  Or wear a shield or march in columns or
Bow down to Mars, if they take out a bloody knife
  And blind the womb that bears a fated life?
The first who ever tried to cut away her child
  Deserved to die for what she had defiled.
How could it be that stretch marks make for such disgust
  That you become like killers palled in dust?
Had mankind's mothers been so selfish, mean, and base,
  There never would have been a human race,
And we'd have needed, one more time, some pair to throw
  Pebbles behind them, so mankind might grow.
Who would have ruined Priam if the mother of
  Achilles hadn't borne her child with love?
If Ilia hadn't given Romulus his birth,
  How could eternal Rome have ruled the earth?
Had Venus ripped Aeneas from her, such a deed
  Would orphan us of Caesars in our need.
You, too, Corinna, born so pretty: you'd have died
  If your mother had done what you just tried.
And me! (Though I'll die from romantic love's excess.)
  My mother gave me life by saying yes.
Why strip the vine of grapes just as it starts to climb,
  Not even drinking wine before its time?
Ripe fruit drops on its own; better a life that's late
  Than death! So great a prize, so brief a wait!
And yet your weapons go on gouging out the wombs
  That poisons make your children's early tombs.
We hate Medea for the blood she's splattered with—
  Her babes'—and grieve for Itys in the myth.
Child killers that they were, at least they had some cause,
  Ruining their men by blood that broke all laws.
Where is your Tereus? Where's the Jason who demands
  You pierce your innards with a mother's hands?
Armenian tigresses won't do what women will;
  No lioness will see her cub and kill,
Though girls of nineteen do—but not without a price
  (Abortion doubles human sacrifice).
Then she is borne away to burn, her hair undone,
  To cries of "serves her right!" from everyone.
But let my words dissolve, and heaven blow away
  The awful burden of these things I say.
Dear gods, allow her—once—to sin and still survive;
  Two sins, and she need not be kept alive.

Ovid's Amores 2.14
translated by Len Krisak

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The Witness of Czeslaw Milosz

Jeremy Driscoll

Joseph Brodsky once declared that "Czeslaw Milosz is one of the greatest poets of our time, perhaps the greatest." After his death on August 14, many of the obituaries and published tributes said the same thing. Milosz's greatness was displayed not only in his poetry but also in his prose. In both he showed himself to be one of the bravest and sharpest thinkers of his time, as most critics have agreed. Yet there is an element of his greatness that has been generally avoided or underestimated even by his admirers. One rarely sees Milosz discussed as a Christian writer or his work as an expression of a profoundly religious imagination. How is it possible to praise Milosz as poet and thinker without coming to grips with his Christian vision? To do so is not just to ignore an essential dimension of his work; it is to miss the heart of his message.

Czeslaw Milosz was born in Szetejnie in 1911 and raised in Wilno, both of which are in present-day Lithuania. His family was part of the large Polish-speaking population of that city. For this reason he identified himself as a Polish writer. Living there through his university education, he was present in 1939 when the Soviets invaded Lithuania, while Hitler simultaneously invaded Poland. At great personal risk, he escaped through the Soviet borders and worked for the Polish resistance in Warsaw throughout the war. Once the war had ended, he tried to make a life for himself in his own nation and was part of the diplomatic corps of Communist Poland's postwar government. He was posted to the consulate in New York and the embassy in Washington. In 1951, while he was serving as the cultural attaché at the Polish embassy in Paris, he defected. He remained in France until 1960, when he took a position at the University of California, Berkeley, as a professor of Slavic literature. In 1980, at the age of seventy, he received the Nobel Prize for Literature. Having lived in exile for fifty years, he moved from the United States to Krakow in 2001 and died there this summer at the age of ninety-three. He had remained productive until the end; a final book of poems, *Second Space,* is being published in English this fall.

This bare-bones summary of his life shows that Milosz's personal history included almost the whole of the twentieth century. He participated in some of its most dramatic episodes and lived within several of its colliding cultures, carving out homes in Lithuania, Poland, France, and the United States. These are the contexts in which his Christian vision was shaped and delivered. Although he often expressed this vision obliquely, he was relentless in his criticism of those who despised faith as an anachronism: "I am not afraid to say that a devout and God-fearing man is superior as a human specimen to a restless mocker who is glad to style himself an 'intellectual,' proud of his cleverness in using ideas which he claims as his own though he acquired them in a pawnshop in exchange for simplicity of heart. . . . The sacred exists and is stronger than all our rebellions." Milosz believed that the role of the poet is crucial in any society—regardless of how

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little poetry is appreciated or its importance understood. Consider his apologia for the poetry he was writing during and after World War II, when the world was undergoing a shock and disillusionment perhaps unparalleled in human history. How should the poet react? Here is Milosz's proposal:

> As is well known, the philosopher Adorno said that it would be an abomination to write lyric poetry after Auschwitz, and the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas gave the year 1941 as the date when God "abandoned" us. Whereas I wrote idyllic verses, "The World" and a number of others, in the very center of what was taking place in the *anus mundi*, and not by any means out of ignorance. . . . Life does not like death. The body, as long as it is able to, sets in opposition to death the heart's contractions and the warmth of circulating blood. Gentle verses written in the midst of horror declare themselves for life; they are the body's rebellion against its destruction.

To retain simplicity of heart, to write verses for life against death—these gentle-sounding goals are not achieved without cost or without a sustaining faith. Yet here it is necessary to remind ourselves of the paradoxical way in which faith is practiced. Faith is practiced in the struggle with faith. Milosz had the courage to expose his struggle in all its intensity; thus the readers with whom he shared his troubles and doubts can trust, or at least consider with appropriate seriousness, his decision to stand within faith's orbit. In a 1959 letter to the Catholic monk and writer Thomas Merton, Milosz wrote, "As to my Catholicism, this is perhaps a subject for a whole letter. In any case few people suspect my basically religious interests and I have never been ranged among 'Catholic writers.' Which, strategically, is perhaps better. We are obliged to bear witness. But of what? That we pray to have faith? This problem—how much we should say openly—is always present in my thoughts." Two things stand out in this candid letter. First, his careful consideration of how best to treat religious themes in his writing. Second, the depth of his humility and poverty before faith.

In one poem, he addresses God wryly, saying, "It seems to me that people who cannot believe in you / deserve your praise," and he confesses later in the same poem, "I pray to you, for I do not know how not to pray." This struggle spanned his entire life. Only a few years ago, feeling his age, he wrote, "Now You are closing down my five senses, slowly, / And I am an old man lying in darkness . . . / Liberate me from guilt, real and imagined. / Give me certainty that I toiled for Your glory. / In the hour of the agony of death, help me with Your suffering / Which cannot save the world from pain."

In a piece written in 1991 he mused at length about the difficulty of sharing thoughts like these. "I feel obliged to speak the truth to my contemporaries and I feel ashamed if they take me to be someone who I am not. In their opinion, a person who 'had faith' is fortunate. They assume that as a result of certain inner experiences he was able to find an answer, while they know only questions. So how can I make a profession of faith in the presence of my fellow human beings? After all, I am one of them, seeking, as they do, the laws of inheritance, and I am just as confused. . . ."

But let us come to the content of what he believed: "To put it very simply and bluntly, I must ask if I believe that the four Gospels tell the truth. My answer to this is: Yes. So I believe in an absurdity, that Jesus rose from the dead? Just answer without any of those evasions and artful tricks employed by theologians: Yes or No? I answer: Yes, and by that response I nullify death's omnipotence. If I am mistaken in my faith, I offer it as a challenge to the Spirit of the Earth. . . ." Later in the same piece he asked, "Ought I to try to explain 'why I believe'? I don't think so. It should suffice if I attempt to convey the coloring or tone. If I believed that man can do good with his own powers, I would have no interest in Christianity. But he cannot, because he is enslaved to his own predatory, domineering instincts. . . . Evil grows and bears fruit, which is understandable, because it has logic and probability on its side and also, of course, strength. The resistance of tiny kernels of good, to which no one grants the power of causing far-reaching consequences, is entirely mysterious, however. Such seeming nothingness not only lasts but contains within itself enormous energy which is revealed gradually. One can draw momentous conclusions from this."

Milosz believed that the religious question ought to be explored in the mainstream of literature and culture. As he grew older, he used the authority he had acquired to challenge those of his colleagues who believed that discussions of religion were beneath their dignity. "To write on literature or art was considered an honorable occupation," he wrote in 1997, "whereas any time notions taken from the language of religion appeared, the one who brought them up was immediately treated as lacking in tact, as if a silent pact had been broken. Yet I lived at a time when a huge change in the contents of the human imagination was occurring. In my lifetime Heaven and Hell disappeared, the belief in life after

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death was considerably weakened. How could I not think of this? And is it not surprising that my preoccupation was a rare case?"

Czeslaw Milosz stood apart as a poet who dared to be preoccupied with such things. He believed that many of the horrors of the twentieth century had their roots in the effort to liberate people from religion. Milosz witnessed these efforts first-hand and reflected on their results: "Religion, opium for the people. To those suffering pain, humiliation, illness, and serfdom, it promised a reward in an afterlife. And now we are witnessing a transformation. A true opium for the people is a belief in nothingness after death—the huge solace of thinking that for our betrayals, greed, cowardice, murder we are not going to be judged."

The evidence of Milosz's Christianity is spread throughout his poems and essays in fragmentary clues. Rarely did he discuss the topic systematically. His faith was often a kind of secret which, once noticed, could explain at least in part his choice of themes and subjects. But sometimes it would come to the surface of his work. In 2002, Milosz published a long poem that was meant to function as a testimonial, *A Theological Treatise*. Milosz was aware that he was risking his reputation by venturing to write about theology, but he chose to use his credibility and clout to address a theme that literary fashion silently prohibited. "Why theology?" he asks in the first paragraph of this poem. (There are twenty-three paragraphs in the whole treatise, each containing varying numbers of stanzas.) He answers, "Because the first must be first. / And first is a notion of truth." The paragraph concludes with a plea and a stipulation: "Let reality return to our speech. / That is, meaning. Impossible without an absolute point of reference." In this testimonial poem, Milosz directly acknowledges God as the absolute point of reference. Many of the Christian themes scattered throughout his writings are here gathered together. One such theme is the frank expression of his own struggle with various elements of Catholic life. He always took theology seriously, but he sometimes wrote about theologians with bitter irony. He found the clericalism in some sectors of the Polish Church to be exaggerated and distasteful. "I apologize, most reverend theologians, for a tone not befitting / the purple of your robes. // I thrash in the bed of my style, searching for a comfortable position, / not too sanctimonious, not too mundane. // There must be a middle place between abstraction and childishness / where one can talk seriously about serious things."

Milosz was wary of the comfortable abstract formulas offered by the academic theologian; they seemed to have little to do with the horrible questions his life story had forced him to confront. He recoiled from mechanical presentations of doctrine and easy explanations of suffering. When a clerical and theological style becomes stiff or sanctimonious, it cannot be taken seriously by people engaged in life-and-death struggles. But a poetry that spoke only of this-worldly things—a poetry that was "too mundane"—would fail to satisfy the deepest longings of the heart. Milosz rightly aims for a "middle place" where it is possible to "talk seriously about serious things."

Yet Milosz believed, somewhat problematically, that the most serious things resisted any kind of definition. The mysteries of the faith were to be praised, described, but not explained. "Catholic dogmas are a few inches too high; we stand on our toes / and for a moment it seems to us that we see," he writes in the *Treatise*. "Yet the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the mystery of Original Sin, / the mystery of the Redemption are all well armored against reason . . . // What in all that can be grasped by little girls / dressed in white for First Communion?"

Milosz's long testimonial poem also reveals his gnostic leanings. The tendency makes for interesting poems, but it adds to his difficulties with Catholic theology. "Not out of frivolity, most reverend theologians, I busied myself with the secret / knowledge of many centuries, but out of the pain in my heart when I looked out / at the atrocity of the world." Here Milosz is explaining and justifying his turn to gnostic texts for help. He addresses himself to the "most reverend theologians" to complain that his need was not being met by their pat assurances. The pain Milosz refers to in this poem is not merely an intellectual sorrow: he is writing not just about the universal tragedy; he is writing about the tragedies of his own life. Wounded by the betrayals and injustices he has witnessed, he longs to understand the mysteries of evil and innocent suffering: "If God is all-powerful, he can allow all this only if he is not good. // Wherefrom then the limits of his power? Why such an order of creation? They all / tried to find an answer, heretics, kabbalists, alchemists, the Knights of the Rose Cross." Here he cites the gnostic sources to which he turned. Surely he was led in this direction by reading Jacob Boehme, who had so strongly influenced Adam Mickiewicz, the critical point of reference for all modern Polish poetry.

It would have been impossible for Milosz not to have gone this gnostic way, at least to some extent. In addition to the Mickiewicz influence, his own temperament inclined him toward it. The horrors he lived through caused him to pose the same questions as

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Distance

At a certain distance I followed behind you, ashamed to come closer.
Though you have chosen me as a worker in your vineyard and I pressed the grapes of your wrath.
To every one according to his nature: what is crippled should not always be healed.
I do not even know whether one can be free, for I have toiled against my will.
Taken by the neck like a boy who kicks and bites
Till they sit him at the desk and order him to make letters,
I wanted to be like others but was given the bitterness of separation,
Believed I would be an equal among equals but woke up a stranger.
Looking at manners as if I arrived from a different time.
Guilty of apostasy from the communal rite.
There are so many who are good and just, those were rightly chosen
And wherever you walk the earth, they accompany you.
Perhaps it is true that I loved you secretly
But without strong hope to be close to you as they are.

Czeslaw Milosz

(Translated from the Polish by Czeslaw Milosz and Robert Hass. From the book New and Collected Poems: 1931-2001 *by Czeslaw Milosz. Copyright © 2001 by the author. Published by arrangement with Ecco, an imprint of HarperCollins.)*

these gnostic texts, and orthodox Christianity was not giving him the spiritual answers he needed. But if the Christianity of his time and place was not delivering those answers, this does not mean that the answers were not there. And in Milosz's struggle we see him betray an instinctive understanding that this may be the case. This explains why, in the midst of the *Treatise*'s lengthy discussion of gnostic questions, he also narrates his own practice of Catholic life. He is being driven by something larger than himself, and it is nothing less than his whole Catholic faith, whether he always chooses it or not. He admits, "Alas, an American saying has applied to me, though it was not coined with kindly intent: / 'Once a Catholic, always a Catholic.'" He is not always comfortable with his religious inheritance, and yet something compels him never to abandon it.

Milosz often sensed a lack in his own faith, and he confesses this in the *Treatise*, as elsewhere (see "Distance," above): "Why not concede," he asks, "that I have not progressed, in my religion, / past the Book of Job?" This can best be understood in light of something he tells us later in the poem: "Only a dark tone, an inclination toward a peculiar Manichean / strain of Christianity, could have led one to the proper trail." Here "the proper trail" means the proper interpretation of his work. All this comes in the paragraph that begins, "To present myself at last as an heir to mystical lodges . . ." He is confessing much, disclosing much, at these points in his testament. He is providing his readers with clearer information about his spiritual life. Hence the "at last" which introduces this revealing paragraph. He is expressing relief as he finally reveals the sources and limits of his religious anxiety.

What is significant for Milosz's readers in this kind of writing is that he names in himself what is a fundamental religious question of our times; namely, getting past Job. Getting past Job—or for that matter, getting past a Manichean Christianity—is a serious religious challenge. The Christian tradition is in fact equipped to take the serious searcher past Job, but it was precisely this part of the tradition that was somehow not delivered to Milosz and which does not appear in the poem. I would suggest that it is only possible to move past Job by going through Job.

There is a tradition of Christian exegesis which reads Job as a prophecy of Christ. One can even imagine Job's complaint provoking the Incarnation and the cross as the response from God. The prefiguration becomes explicit at Job 10:4-5, where Job says to God, "Have you eyes of flesh? Do you see as man sees? Are your days as the days of a mortal?" In fact, in the Incarnation and the death of Jesus, God can now answer Yes to this question. This Yes is strongly underlined in the phrase

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from St. Paul in the Letter to the Philippians 2:8: "obedient unto death, yes, death on a cross." In the same part of the poem where Milosz quipped about the little girls dressed in white for First Communion, he also warns, "And it will not do to prattle on about sweet little Jesus / in the hay of his cradle." But, of course, sweet little Jesus in the hay is not the central announcement of Christian faith. The central announcement is Jesus Christ, "and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2). Milosz's warning against a sweet little Jesus is equivalent to Job's demand for a serious answer to his serious question. But the death of Jesus on the cross is God's serious answer. In the end, Milosz's *Treatise* does not grapple deeply enough with this divine answer.

To come back to Milosz's words at this point in the poem, he notes a difference between himself and Job—namely, that Job thought of himself as innocent while the poet is not. "I was not innocent, I wanted to be innocent, but I couldn't be." But in the end it was not Job's innocence that was important but rather the majesty and mystery of God, before which Job bowed down and became silent. In an earlier writing Milosz had shown himself to be aware that this was the key insight of Job, even if, in the poet's version of the story, God says things that are rather more severe than anything to be found in the book of Job. In a little essay titled "Misfortune" in *Milosz's ABCs*, Milosz writes, "To create a universe like the one we have is not nice. 'And why should I have to be nice?' asks God. 'Where did you get such ideas?'" This is strong thinking. It is acquiescence to the impenetrable mystery of God, an acquiescence to whatever of God the death of Jesus on the cross is meant to reveal.

When in the *Treatise* Milosz refers to his own practices as a Catholic, he speaks with a remarkable humility, contrasting his own weakness with the strength of the communion to which he belongs. This humility is especially striking since Milosz was, by temperament, a proud man, as he himself often acknowledged. His fine mind and his natural sophistication caused him to hesitate before the requirements of faith. But in the end he rejected the option of turning his sophistication against simpler believers. Near the very beginning of the *Treatise* he states, "The opposition, I versus they, seemed immoral. / It meant he [Milosz] considered himself better than they were." At the end, having agonized through much of the poem over the questions posed by his gnostic favorites, he comes back much more strongly to a defense of the categories of Christian worship. "Treat with understanding persons of weak faith. // Myself included," he writes. "One day I believe, another I disbelieve. // Yet I feel warmth among people at prayer. / Since they believe, they help me to believe / in their existence, these incomprehensible beings . . . // Naturally, I am a skeptic. Yet I sing with them, / thus overcoming the contradiction / between my private religion and the religion of the rite."

This confession repeats a theme that Milosz has accented frequently in his poetry. Let three poems suffice as examples. In one he speaks approvingly of "Helene's Religion": "On Sunday I go to church and pray with all the others. / Who am I to think I am different?" And yet, familiar disappointment in the Church rises to the surface as Helene says, "Enough that I don't listen to what the priests blabber in their sermons. / Otherwise, I would have to concede that I reject common sense." Then, speaking for and with Milosz himself, she continues: "I have tried to be a faithful daughter of my Roman Catholic Church. / I recite the Our Father, the Credo and Hail Mary / Against my abominable unbelief." Here the solid regularity of Catholic practice faces down Milosz's reflexive skepticism.

In "With Her" Milosz speaks of hearing a passage from Scripture during Mass at St. Mary Magdalen in Berkeley: "A reading this Sunday from the Book of Wisdom / About how God has not made death / And does not rejoice in the annihilation of the living." We should not be surprised that the words catch his attention. They directly address the key question that he and the gnostics often posed: how to reconcile death and innocent suffering with the notion of a good God. The poem continues: "A reading from the Gospel according to Mark / About a little girl to whom He said: 'Talitha, cumi!'" Then, with an unselfconscious humility, the poet witnesses to how he has received these words. He writes, "This is for me. To make me rise from the dead / And repeat the hope of those who lived before me." Here Milosz is exactly a Christian—the scriptural word is received as a word for him in that moment, together with all those who have believed before him. The theological term for this is "communion of saints."

The poem "In a Parish" can serve as a third example of Milosz's understanding of Catholic practice. He begins, "Had I not been frail and half broken inside, / I wouldn't think of them, who are like myself half broken inside. / I would not climb the cemetery hill by the church / To get rid of my self-pity." Here again is Milosz involved in Catholic practice, the visiting of cemeteries being an especially strong part of Polish Catholicism. But he is also bringing to explicit expression what is implicit in any Christian gathering, whether among the living or the dead—namely, the recognition that we are all frail and broken. This is, among other things, what brings Christians together

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across differences of background. As Milosz looks at the names on the tombs, from his own "half broken inside" he begins to establish a communion with those buried there, musing ironically on the meanings of the names he reads: "Crazy Sophies, / Michaels who lost every battle, / Self-destructive Agathas." When a child is born we name him or her with an uncomplicated hope. But then the child grows up and a sadder story must be told. Still, Milosz sees all these lives under the sign that, for a Christian, ultimately explains existence: they all "lie under crosses with their dates of birth and death." And in this moment the poet feels his vocation again. He asks, "And who / is going to express them? Their mumblings, weepings, hopes, tears of humiliation?" Milosz does not answer this question in the poem, but his work as poet has always been to give voice to precisely this: all the sad, neglected stories of so many men and women.

But for Christian faith, under every cross and every sad story lies the hope of resurrection. It is this that Milosz ultimately expresses as he gives voice to the dead. The poem ends with him addressing them all: "Thus we go down into the earth, my fellow parishioners." We may call this a sad story, but we should also note the communion expressed in going down to death with "fellows." And how do we all go down? "With the hope that the trumpet of judgment will call us by our names." Christian faith teaches that such a call will not summon us to some vague eternity. Instead, we shall be renewed as the particular persons we were meant to be, expressed mysteriously in our names, their deepest, truest meaning now revealed in the "judgment that will call us by our names." And this in the "new heavens and new earth" promised by the Scripture (2 Peter 3:13). And so Milosz concludes, "Instead of eternity, greenness and the movement of clouds. / They rise then, thousands of Sophias, Michaels, Matthews, / Marias, Agathas, Bartholomews. / So that at last they know why / And for what reason?"

These three poems may help us to understand Milosz's ultimate message in the *Treatise*—namely, his choice to "sing with them," his fellow Christians, despite the fact that he is naturally a skeptic, and despite his lengthy grappling with gnostic theories.

In the last stanza of the *Treatise*, Milosz addresses himself directly to the "Beautiful Lady, you who appeared to the children at Lourdes and Fatima." Such a direct invocation involved a great risk; Milosz knew it might alienate many of his readers. They would wonder how such a serious writer could take seriously the Marian apparitions at Lourdes and Fatima. Believing in the authenticity of such apparitions is not even a requirement of Catholic faith. And yet here is Milosz admitting, "I too have been a pilgrim in Lourdes / by the grotto," and further, "Lady, I asked you for a miracle." And if these revelations of common piety upset his nonreligious admirers, he, too, was somewhat upset by the experience: "My presence in such a place was disturbed / By my duty as a poet who should not flatter popular imaginings, / Yet who desires to remain faithful to your unfathomable intention / When you appeared to children at Fatima and Lourdes."

We must take this as his last word in this long poem (that is in fact what it is). After rehearsing all his anguished questions and the gnostic solutions to which he had sometimes turned along the way, he finishes with a serene prayer to the Beautiful Lady and takes children as his model. He no longer demands a transparent solution to the problem of innocent suffering. Instead, he expresses a humbler aim: to remain faithful to the "unfathomable intention" of the mother of Christ. Milosz had suggested earlier in this stanza that part of this intention has to do with beauty: "As if you wished to remind them that beauty is / one of the components of the world." The Lady herself is beautiful, as is the place where she appears, "in Lourdes / by the grotto, where you hear the rustle of the river and, / in the pure blue sky above the mountains, a narrow scrap of moon."

Milosz wished to bear witness to the great Christian insight about beauty, so memorably expressed by Dostoevsky: beauty will save the world. For Milosz this was not an insight arrived at late in life; the *Treatise* presents us with the mature version of what we already saw in the poetry he was writing during the darkest period of the Second World War: "Gentle verses written in the midst of horror declare themselves for life." As a young poet, Milosz knew that it was always the poet's job to record and praise the world's passing beauty. In the *Treatise*, the older Milosz reminds us that the poet receives this beauty from a permanent source beyond the world.

If this message about beauty was indeed part of the Lady's intention, we might go on to ask whether her intention might ultimately concern the revelation of her Son as the secret of her own and the world's beauty. After all, everything about Mary leads us in this direction. Non-Catholics often worry about an excessive Catholic devotion to Mary, and in some cases the worry is justified; but in Catholic teaching and tradition—and here Milosz is typically Catholic in making Mary his last reference—Mary, though beautiful in herself, leads us first and last to Christ, who is beautiful even in his dying. He is the Beauty that will save the world. FT

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Surgical Sex

Paul McHugh

When the practice of sex-change surgery first emerged back in the early 1970s, I would often remind its advocating psychiatrists that with other patients, alcoholics in particular, they would quote the Serenity Prayer, "God, give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." Where did they get the idea that our sexual identity ("gender" was the term they preferred) as men or women was in the category of things that could be changed?

Their regular response was to show me their patients. Men (and until recently they were all men) with whom I spoke before their surgery would tell me that their bodies and sexual identities were at variance. Those I met after surgery would tell me that the surgery and hormone treatments that had made them "women" had also made them happy and contented. None of these encounters were persuasive, however. The post-surgical subjects struck me as caricatures of women. They wore high heels, copious makeup, and flamboyant clothing; they spoke about how they found themselves able to give vent to their natural inclinations for peace, domesticity, and gentleness—but their large hands, prominent Adam's apples, and thick facial features were incongruous (and would become more so as they aged). Women psychiatrists whom I sent to talk with them would intuitively see through the disguise and the exaggerated postures. "Gals know gals," one said to me, "and that's a guy."

The subjects before the surgery struck me as even more strange, as they struggled to convince anyone who might influence the decision for their surgery. First, they spent an unusual amount of time thinking and talking about sex and their sexual experiences; their sexual hungers and adventures seemed to preoccupy them. Second, discussion of babies or children provoked little interest from them; indeed, they seemed indifferent to children. But third, and most remarkable, many of these men-who-claimed-to-be-women reported that they found women sexually attractive and that they saw themselves as "lesbians." When I noted to their champions that their psychological leanings seemed more like those of men than of women, I would get various replies, mostly to the effect that in making such judgments I was drawing on sexual stereotypes.

Until 1975, when I became psychiatrist-in-chief at Johns Hopkins Hospital, I could usually keep my own counsel on these matters. But once I was given authority over all the practices in the psychiatry department I realized that if I were passive I would be tacitly co-opted in encouraging sex-change surgery in the very department that had originally proposed and still defended it. I decided to challenge what I considered to be a misdirection of psychiatry and to demand more information both before and after their operations.

Two issues presented themselves as targets for study. First, I wanted to test the claim that men who had undergone sex-change surgery found resolution for their many general psychological problems. Second (and this was more ambitious), I wanted to see whether male infants with ambiguous genitalia who were being surgically transformed into females and raised as girls did, as the theory (again from Hopkins) claimed, settle easily into the sexual identity that was chosen for them. These claims had generated the opinion in psychiatric circles that one's "sex" and one's

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"gender" were distinct matters, sex being genetically and hormonally determined from conception, while gender was culturally shaped by the actions of family and others during childhood.

The first issue was easier and required only that I encourage the ongoing research of a member of the faculty who was an accomplished student of human sexual behavior. The psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Jon Meyer was already developing a means of following up with adults who received sex-change operations at Hopkins in order to see how much the surgery had helped them. He found that most of the patients he tracked down some years after their surgery were contented with what they had done and that only a few regretted it. But in every other respect, they were little changed in their psychological condition. They had much the same problems with relationships, work, and emotions as before. The hope that they would emerge now from their emotional difficulties to flourish psychologically had not been fulfilled.

We saw the results as demonstrating that just as these men enjoyed cross-dressing as women before the operation so they enjoyed cross-living after it. But they were no better in their psychological integration or any easier to live with. With these facts in hand I concluded that Hopkins was fundamentally cooperating with a mental illness. We psychiatrists, I thought, would do better to concentrate on trying to fix their minds and not their genitalia.

Thanks to this research, Dr. Meyer was able to make some sense of the mental disorders that were driving this request for unusual and radical treatment. Most of the cases fell into one of two quite different groups. One group consisted of conflicted and guilt-ridden homosexual men who saw a sex-change as a way to resolve their conflicts over homosexuality by allowing them to behave sexually as females with men. The other group, mostly older men, consisted of heterosexual (and some bisexual) males who found intense sexual arousal in cross-dressing as females. As they had grown older, they had become eager to add more verisimilitude to their costumes and either sought or had suggested to them a surgical transformation that would include breast implants, penile amputation, and pelvic reconstruction to resemble a woman.

Further study of similar subjects in the psychiatric services of the Clark Institute in Toronto identified these men by the auto-arousal they experienced in imitating sexually seductive females. Many of them imagined that their displays might be sexually arousing to onlookers, especially to females. This idea, a form of "sex in the head" (D. H. Lawrence), was what provoked their first adventure in dressing up in women's undergarments and had eventually led them toward the surgical option. Because most of them found women to be the objects of their interest they identified themselves to the psychiatrists as lesbians. The name eventually coined in Toronto to describe this form of sexual misdirection was "autogynephilia." Once again I concluded that to provide a surgical alteration to the body of these unfortunate people was to collaborate with a mental disorder rather than to treat it.

This information and the improved understanding of what we had been doing led us to stop prescribing sex-change operations for adults at Hopkins—much, I'm glad to say, to the relief of several of our plastic surgeons who had previously been commandeered to carry out the procedures. And with this solution to the first issue I could turn to the second—namely, the practice of surgically assigning femaleness to male newborns who at birth had malformed, sexually ambiguous genitalia and severe phallic defects. This practice, more the province of the pediatric department than of my own, was nonetheless of concern to psychiatrists because the opinions generated around these cases helped to form the view that sexual identity was a matter of cultural conditioning rather than something fundamental to the human constitution.

Several conditions, fortunately rare, can lead to the misconstruction of the genito-urinary tract during embryonic life. When such a condition occurs in a male, the easiest form of plastic surgery by far, with a view to correcting the abnormality and gaining a cosmetically satisfactory appearance, is to remove all the male parts, including the testes, and to construct from the tissues available a labial and vaginal configuration. This action provides these malformed babies with female-looking genital anatomy regardless of their genetic sex. Given the claim that the sexual identity of the child would easily follow the genital appearance if backed up by familial and cultural support, the pediatric surgeons took to constructing female-like genitalia for both females with an XX chromosome constitution and males with an XY so as to make them all look like little girls, and they were to be raised as girls by their parents.

All this was done of course with consent of the parents who, distressed by these grievous malformations in their newborns, were persuaded by the pediatric endocrinologists and consulting psychologists to accept transformational surgery for their sons. They were told that their child's sexual identity (again his "gender") would simply conform to environmental conditioning. If the parents consistently

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responded to the child as a girl now that his genital structure resembled a girl's, he would accept that role without much travail.

This proposal presented the parents with a critical decision. The doctors increased the pressure behind the proposal by noting to the parents that a decision had to be made promptly because a child's sexual identity settles in by about age two or three. The process of inducing the child into the female role should start immediately, with name, birth certificate, baby paraphernalia, etc. With the surgeons ready and the physicians confident, the parents were faced with an offer difficult to refuse (although, interestingly, a few parents did refuse this advice and decided to let nature take its course).

I thought these professional opinions and the choices being pressed on the parents rested upon anecdotal evidence that was hard to verify and even harder to replicate. Despite the confidence of their advocates, they lacked substantial empirical support. I encouraged one of our resident psychiatrists, William G. Reiner (already interested in the subject because prior to his psychiatric training he had been a pediatric urologist and had witnessed the problem from the other side), to set about doing a systematic follow-up of these children—particularly the males transformed into females in infancy—so as to determine just how sexually integrated they became as adults.

The results here were even more startling than in Meyer's work. Reiner picked out for intensive study cloacal exstrophy, because it would best test the idea that cultural influence plays the foremost role in producing sexual identity. Cloacal exstrophy is an embryonic misdirection that produces a gross abnormality of pelvic anatomy such that the bladder and the genitalia are badly deformed at birth. The male penis fails to form and the bladder and urinary tract are not separated distinctly from the gastrointestinal tract. But crucial to Reiner's study is the fact that the embryonic development of these unfortunate males is not hormonally different from that of normal males. They develop within a male-typical prenatal hormonal milieu provided by their Y chromosome and by their normal testicular function. This exposes these growing embryos/fetuses to the male hormone testosterone—just like all males in their mother's womb.

Although animal research had long since shown that male sexual behavior was directly derived from this exposure to testosterone during embryonic life, this fact did not deter the pediatric practice of surgically treating male infants with this grievous anomaly by castration (amputating their testes and any vestigial male genital structures) and vaginal construction, so that they could be raised as girls. This practice had become almost universal by the mid-1970s. Such cases offered Reiner the best test of the two aspects of the doctrine underlying such treatment: (1) that humans at birth are neutral as to their sexual identity, and (2) that for humans it is the postnatal, cultural, nonhormonal influences, especially those of early childhood, that most influence their ultimate sexual identity. Males with cloacal exstrophy were regularly altered surgically to resemble females, and their parents were instructed to raise them as girls. But would the fact that they had had the full testosterone exposure in utero defeat the attempt to raise them as girls? Answers might become evident with the careful follow-up that Reiner was launching.

Before describing his results, I should note that the doctors proposing this treatment for the males with cloacal exstrophy understood and acknowledged that they were introducing a number of new and severe physical problems for these males. These infants, of course, had no ovaries, and their testes were surgically amputated, which meant that they had to receive exogenous hormones for life. They would also be denied by the same surgery any opportunity for fertility later on. One could not ask the little patient about his willingness to pay this price. These were considered by the physicians advising the parents to be acceptable burdens to bear in order to avoid distress in childhood about malformed genital structures, and it was hoped that they could follow a conflict-free direction in their maturation as girls and women.

Reiner, however, discovered that such re-engineered males were almost never comfortable as females once they became aware of themselves and the world. From the start of their active play life, they behaved spontaneously like boys and were obviously different from their sisters and other girls, enjoying rough-and-tumble games but not dolls and "playing house." Later on, most of those individuals who learned that they were actually genetic males wished to reconstitute their lives as males (some even asked for surgical reconstruction and male hormone replacement)—and all this despite the earnest efforts by their parents to treat them as girls.

Reiner's results, reported in the January 22, 2004, issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine,* are worth recounting. He followed up sixteen genetic males with cloacal exstrophy seen at Hopkins, of whom fourteen underwent neonatal assignment to femaleness socially, legally, and surgically. The other two parents refused the advice of the pediatricians and raised their sons as boys. Eight of the fourteen subjects assigned to be females had since declared themselves to be male. Five were living as females, and one

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lived with unclear sexual identity. The two raised as males had remained male. All sixteen of these people had interests that were typical of males, such as hunting, ice hockey, karate, and bobsledding. Reiner concluded from this work that the sexual identity followed the genetic constitution. Male-type tendencies (vigorous play, sexual arousal by females, and physical aggressiveness) followed the testosterone-rich intrauterine fetal development of the people he studied, regardless of efforts to socialize them as females after birth.

Having looked at the Reiner and Meyer studies, we in the Johns Hopkins Psychiatry Department eventually concluded that human sexual identity is mostly built into our constitution by the genes we inherit and the embryogenesis we undergo. Male hormones sexualize the brain and the mind. Sexual dysphoria—a sense of disquiet in one's sexual role—naturally occurs amongst those rare males who are raised as females in an effort to correct an infantile genital structural problem. A seemingly similar disquiet can be socially induced in apparently constitutionally normal males, in association with (and presumably prompted by) serious behavioral aberrations, amongst which are conflicted homosexual orientations and the remarkable male deviation now called autogynephilia.

Quite clearly, then, we psychiatrists should work to discourage those adults who seek surgical sex reassignment. When Hopkins announced that it would stop doing these procedures in adults with sexual dysphoria, many other hospitals followed suit, but some medical centers still carry out this surgery. Thailand has several centers that do the surgery "no questions asked" for anyone with the money to pay for it and the means to travel to Thailand. I am disappointed but not surprised by this, given that some surgeons and medical centers can be persuaded to carry out almost any kind of surgery when pressed by patients with sexual deviations, especially if those patients find a psychiatrist to vouch for them. The most astonishing example is the surgeon in England who is prepared to amputate the legs of patients who claim to find sexual excitement in gazing at and exhibiting stumps of amputated legs. At any rate, we at Hopkins hold that official psychiatry has good evidence to argue against this kind of treatment and should begin to close down the practice everywhere.

For children with birth defects the most rational approach at this moment is to correct promptly any of the major urological defects they face, but to postpone any decision about sexual identity until much later, while raising the child according to its genetic sex. Medical caretakers and parents can strive to make the child aware that aspects of sexual identity will emerge as he or she grows. Settling on what to do about it should await maturation and the child's appreciation of his or her own identity.

Proper care, including good parenting, means helping the child through the medical and social difficulties presented by the genital anatomy but in the process protecting what tissues can be retained, in particular the gonads. This effort must continue to the point where the child can see the problem of a life role more clearly as a sexually differentiated individual emerges from within. Then as the young person gains a sense of responsibility for the result, he or she can be helped through any surgical constructions that are desired. Genuine informed consent derives only from the person who is going to live with the outcome and cannot rest upon the decisions of others who believe they "know best."

How are these ideas now being received? I think tolerably well. The "transgender" activists (now often allied with gay liberation movements) still argue that their members are entitled to whatever surgery they want, and they still claim that their sexual dysphoria represents a true conception of their sexual identity. They have made some protests against the diagnosis of autogynephilia as a mechanism to generate demands for sex-change operations, but they have offered little evidence to refute the diagnosis. Psychiatrists are taking better sexual histories from those requesting sex-change and are discovering more examples of this strange male exhibitionist proclivity.

Much of the enthusiasm for the quick-fix approach to birth defects expired when the anecdotal evidence about the much-publicized case of a male twin raised as a girl proved to be bogus. The psychologist in charge hid, by actually misreporting, the news that the boy, despite the efforts of his parents to treat him and raise him as a girl, had constantly challenged their treatment of him, ultimately found out about the deception, and restored himself as a male. Sadly, he carried an additional diagnosis of major depression and ultimately committed suicide.

I think the issue of sex-change for males is no longer one in which much can be said for the other side. But I have learned from the experience that the toughest challenge is trying to gain agreement to seek empirical evidence for opinions about sex and sexual behavior, even when the opinions seem on their face unreasonable. One might expect that those who claim that sexual identity has no biological or physical basis would bring forth more evidence to persuade others. But as I've learned, there is a deep prejudice in favor of the idea that nature is totally malleable.

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Without any fixed position on what is given in human nature, any manipulation of it can be defended as legitimate. A practice that appears to give people what they want—and what some of them are prepared to clamor for—turns out to be difficult to combat with ordinary professional experience and wisdom. Even controlled trials or careful follow-up studies to ensure that the practice itself is not damaging are often resisted and the results rejected.

I have witnessed a great deal of damage from sex-reassignment. The children transformed from their male constitution into female roles suffered prolonged distress and misery as they sensed their natural attitudes. Their parents usually lived with guilt over their decisions—second-guessing themselves and somewhat ashamed of the fabrication, both surgical and social, they had imposed on their sons. As for the adults who came to us claiming to have discovered their "true" sexual identity and to have heard about sex-change operations, we psychiatrists have been distracted from studying the causes and natures of their mental misdirections by preparing them for surgery and for a life in the other sex. We have wasted scientific and technical resources and damaged our professional credibility by collaborating with madness rather than trying to study, cure, and ultimately prevent it. FT

Termination for Cause

Sir,
I had thought the terms of our agreement
Were quite clear.
You were to provide me length of days,
Model children by a docile wife, support for same;
Keep far away all disaster man-made
Or act of your own.
And a death if not quite painless
At least sudden, without humiliation.
I in turn would confess You Creator
Of all things seen and unseen, offering customary
Praise and adoration.

Regarding line four above
Your performance has been marginal at best,
And I have now confirmation
From two physicians
Of what I must deem willful disregard
As to length of days and dying.

I therefore recognize no further obligation whatsoever
To provide the aforesaid praise, etc.
Or, indeed, to acknowledge Your existence.

Any further communication should be directed
To my counsel,
Who assures me that he knows You
from of old.

James F. O'Callaghan

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Books in Review

The Unsilent Pope

Inside the Vatican of Pius XII: The Memoir of an American Diplomat During World War II.
By Harold H. Tittmann, Jr.
Image. 224 pp. $13.95 paper.

Reviewed by William Doino, Jr. and Joseph Bottum

Critics of Pius XII have long claimed that the Allies were bitterly frustrated by the pontiff's official neutrality during World War II. Among the evidence for this they cite some of the official dispatches of Harold H. Tittmann, Jr., who from 1940 to 1946 was chief assistant to Myron Taylor, Franklin Roosevelt's personal representative to the Vatican. In works from Saul Friedlander's 1966 *Pius XII and the Third Reich* to John Cornwell's 1999 *Hitler's Pope*, the occasional criticisms expressed in Tittmann's dispatches have been quoted against Pius. Now we have the dispassionate postwar reflections of Tittmann himself, which paint a very different picture.

Although Tittmann lived until 1980, he rarely spoke about Pius XII. Instead, he quietly worked on his memoirs, which his son, Harold III (who lived with his father in the Vatican during the German occupation of Rome) has now edited and published under the title *Inside the Vatican of Pius XII*. Given Tittmann's importance in the debate about the papacy during the war, these memoirs may be the most important document to be published on Pius XII in over twenty years. And they prove to be, far from an indictment, an overwhelming defense of the Pope and the Catholic Church.

Tittmann, an Episcopalian, was an impressive man. As a pilot in Eddie Rickenbacker's 94th Squadron during World War I, he sustained an attack by five German fighter planes and survived the resultant crash landing, though he lost his right leg, one kidney, and half of a lung, and was, his son writes, "reputed to be the most severely wounded-in-action American to have survived in the First World War." After recovering, Tittmann went to work for the foreign service, filling various posts before joining Taylor's Vatican mission in 1940.

There are at least half a dozen major revelations in this memoir. Perhaps the most interesting comes when Tittmann relates his discussions with Joseph Mueller, the anti-Nazi Bavarian lawyer who served as a middle-man between Pius and the German resistance. "Dr. Mueller said that during the war his anti-Nazi

William Doino, Jr. *is a contributor to* The Pius War *(Lexington Books), edited by Joseph Bottum and David G. Dalin.* Joseph Bottum *is Books & Arts editor of the* Weekly Standard *and poetry editor of* First Things.

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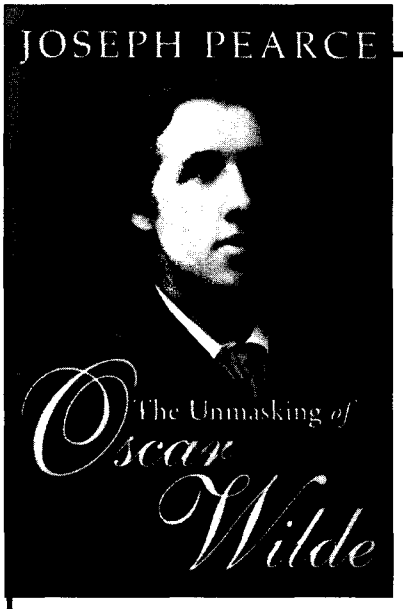
organization in Germany had always been very insistent that the Pope should refrain from making any public statement singling out the Nazis and specifically condemning them and had recommended that the Pope's remarks should be confined to generalities only," Tittmann writes. To have this testimony from a leading member of the anti-Nazi resistance means that Pius XII's conduct during the war was not due solely to his personal instincts but also to the explicit advice of the anti-Nazi resistance.

Other revelations include the Vatican's maintenance of "special accounts in New York banks" operated by Archbishop Spellman, as well as a "personal and secret account" for Pius XII ("about which Spellman knew nothing"), which the Pope "used exclusively for charitable purposes" during the war. Pius revealed the accounts to Tittmann in a "strictly confidential" meeting, after Roosevelt issued an executive order freezing American assets of hostile European countries. How much of this papal money was distributed to those persecuted by the Nazis is unknown, but Tittmann at least strengthens the testimony of Fr. Robert Leiber, Pius' longtime aide, who told *Look* magazine in 1966: "The Pope sided very unequivocally with the Jews at the time. He spent his entire private fortune on their behalf."

Tittmann provides, as well, new details of the Vatican's anxiety over written documents that might expose the Pope's anti-Nazi activities and collaboration with the Allies. "It was only rarely that records were kept by the Vatican officials of conversations the Pope had with his intimate collaborators or even with important visitors from the outside, such as ministers, ambassadors, or private individuals offering information or suggestions," Tittmann writes. When the German occupation of Rome began on September 10, 1943, Nazi surveillance increased dramatically, and Pius' secretary of state, Cardinal Maglione, quickly recommended that any compromising documents be destroyed. Tittmann notes: "At a meeting on September 14, the Allied diplomats decided to follow the cardinal's advice by destroying all documents that might possibly be of use to the enemy. Osborne [British minister to the Holy See] and I had already finished our burning, and the others completed theirs without exception by September 23, when I reported to the State Department." As a result, even the many official diplomatic documents which survive



THE UNMASKING *of* OSCAR WILDE

Joseph Pearce

Vilified by fellow Victorians for his sexuality and his dandyism, Oscar Wilde, the great poet, satirist and playwright, is hailed today, in some circles, as a "progressive" sexual liberator. But this is not how Wilde saw himself. His actions and pretensions did not bring him happiness and fulfillment. This study of Wilde's brilliant and tragic life goes beyond the mistakes that brought him notoriety in order to explore this emotional and spiritual search.

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— Ron Hansen,

New York Times Best-selling Author of *Mariette in Ecstasy*

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the war years represent merely a fraction of Pius XII's activities.

Even readers who have not been intensely concerned with the debates over the papacy during World War II will find this book to be a good read. Tittmann recounts, for instance, the moment he found himself caught in an elevator with the ambassadors of Japan and Germany: "As the narrow, old-fashioned elevator proceeded upwards slowly to its destination, all we could do at first in this embarrassing situation was to try to ignore each other by looking the other way." When the door finally opened, there was a long, awkward pause: no one knew who should move first. "After much bowing and scraping by all three of us, the two ambassadors decided that I should be the lucky one. So contrary to established protocol, out went the chargé d'affaires of the United States ahead of the ambassadors of his country's worst enemies."

AS EDITOR OF THE TEXT, Tittmann's son Harold III has added passages from his own journal, written as a fifteen-year-old boy, many of them remarkably observant. For instance, on the retreating Germans leaving Rome: "They looked terribly depressed. Some stopped right below me and sat down on some grass. Others bought some filthy lemonade from a little stand, also right below me. I must say that the Romans were very kind to them, although they were immensely relieved to see them leaving. They gave the Germans drinks and cigarettes. It is in the character of Romans to be kind to everyone in trouble."

Both father and son speak of the broad Vatican network that provided assistance to persecuted Jews and Allied prisoners of war. In his commentary, interspersed throughout the memoir, Tittmann's son provides new details about the activities of Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty, the charismatic Irish priest who directed an anti-Nazi ring within the Vatican. Tittmann himself assisted many, helped by such men as Fr. Joseph McGeogh of the North American College in Rome and Monsignor Herissé, a French canon of Saint Peter's. The latter, according to Tittmann's son, "did not hide his complete support for the Allied cause. We ran into him one day. . . . One piece of news we brought up was the sinking of a German troopship by a British submarine, resulting in the deaths of several hundred German soldiers. Herissé, in an un-Christian outburst, said: '*Pas assez*! (Not enough!)' Herissé and another pro-Allied French priest, Monsignor Fontenelle [chief biographer of Pius XI], were particularly active in clandestine operations."

Discussing the charge that Pius went easy on Nazism because of his fears of Soviet communism, Tittmann insists that the Pope "detested the Nazi ideology and everything it stood for," and he describes in fresh detail Pius' intervention for an extension of America's lend-lease policy to Russia, persuading the American Catholic hierarchy to soften its stand against the Soviet Union in order to serve a greater, and more immediate, cause—the defeat of Nazi Germany. "Thus Pius XII himself had joined the President," Tittmann says, "in admitting that Hitlerism was an enemy of the Church more dangerous than Stalinism and that the only way to overcome the former was an Allied victory, even if this meant assistance from Soviet Russia."

Although a strong admirer of President Roosevelt, Tittmann does not flinch from criticizing the Allies' carpet-bombing of Italian cities and religious institutions (including the attack on Castel Gandolfo, where the Pope was sheltering thousands of refugees). Tittmann also reveals how Roosevelt, anxious to secure American Catholic support for the lend-lease program to Russia and eager for the Pope to intervene for him with the American bishops, wrote Pius a letter claiming that "churches in Russia are open"—and asserting his putative belief that there was "a real possibility that Russia may, as a result of the present conflict, recognize freedom of religion." Obviously embarrassed by this, Tittmann

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quotes another State Department official who had been stationed in Moscow as saying "he could not understand how such a letter as the President's could ever have been written in the first place in view of all the contrary information that was on file in the State Department."

CRITICS OFTEN CHARGE Pius with refusing to speak out against the Third Reich publicly and explicitly. Besides being inaccurate—the Vatican had excoriated Nazism long before Hitler came to power—the criticism is simplistic. As Tittmann points out, soon after World War II began, Pius XII authorized Vatican Radio to specifically condemn Nazi war crimes in Poland, naming the Nazis as the perpetrators, and Catholics and Jews as their victims. "However," writes Tittmann, "the Polish bishops hastened to notify the Vatican that after each broadcast had come over the air, the various local populations suffered 'terrible' reprisals. The thought that there were those paying with their lives for the information publicized by Vatican Radio made the continuation of these broadcasts impossible." Pius XII had tried the route of "explicit" condemnation—and it failed.

Toward the end of 1942, when reports of Nazi atrocities were increasing, Allied diplomats asked Pius to brand the Nazis by name. Despite his concern for ongoing reprisals, which had wrought havoc the previous July in Holland, Pius agreed—on the condition that he name the Soviets and condemn their war crimes as well; he reasoned that as universal pope, he could not condemn one totalitarian regime and wholly refrain from mentioning another whose principles were strikingly similar. But when the Allies learned that Pius XII intended to include the Soviet Union in his condemnation, they dropped their request immediately, lest Stalin become enraged.

Tittmann concedes that the Pope had the better of the argument: "It was difficult for us to argue these points effectively with the Pope and in the end we were obliged to resign ourselves to the failure of our attempts." The debate may have been unnecessary, for as Pius himself told Tittmann shortly before his 1942 Christmas address, "I have already stated in three consecutive Christmas broadcasts that antireligious, totalitarian principles are iniquitous. These are the principles of the Nazis as any child can see."

As to whether there would have been fewer victims had Pius been more outspoken, Tittmann says: "There can be no final answer. Personally, I cannot help but feel that the Holy Father chose the better path by not speaking out and thereby saved many lives. Who can say what the Nazis would have done in their ruthless furor had they been further inflamed by public denunciations coming from the Holy See? It should also be remembered that the Nazi authorities were gradually realizing that they were destined to lose the war and the psychological effect of such blighted hopes could easily have caused them to react even more violently to outside pressure. To the wealth of information in the archives on similar situations garnered by the Vatican over the centuries, and to the help of expert historians using these archives, Pope Pius XII was able to add his unusual personal knowledge of the Nazi and German character. There was much inside information available to the Pontiff from secret sources. Who could have been more qualified than this Pope to decide under the circumstances?"

Tittmann's final assessment of Pius is persuasive and, indeed, moving: "With his diplomatic background, he was inclined to see both sides of a question, and this may have given others the impression that he was sometimes timid and reluctant to make decisions, especially in foreign affairs. In reality this was not the case. He was, in fact, decisive. . . . I do not for one moment overlook his great spiritual qualities. Whether near him or away from him, one was always conscious of them. To me, he was definitely a spiritual man. . . . Very possibly the future will rate him a saint."

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Malignant Genius

Nietzsche and Music.
By Georges Liébert.
University of Chicago Press.
291 pp. $38.

Death-Devoted Heart: Sex and the Sacred in Wagner's Tristan and Isolde
By Roger Scruton.
Oxford University Press.
238 pp. $25.

Reviewed by Algis Valiunas

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was the nineteenth century's most penetrating writer on music, as he was on much else, and he was also a gifted musician. Beginning piano lessons at age five, first with his mother, then with a demonically pedantic choir director, he would soon be playing Beethoven sonatas handily. As a young boy he scorned "the alleged 'music of the future' of Liszt and Berlioz," but by the time he reached fourteen he was composing balefully dissonant pieces, expressing "the blackest and most radical things I know in raven-black music." He never did become the musician he hoped to be; his entire musical output consisted of some Schumann-like songs, a few efforts for piano, and a stirring "Hymn to Life."

He would, however, become the most celebrated friend of the most celebrated German composer of his time, Richard Wagner (1813-1883), and later his most notorious enemy. "From the moment when there was a piano redaction of *Tristan* . . . I was a Wagnerian," Nietzsche wrote in 1888, when he had been for over a decade a committed anti-Wagnerian. The early development of Nietzsche's friendship with Wagner, Nietzsche's stint as the composer's spellbound acolyte, and his eventual break with Wagner take up nearly the whole of Georges Liébert's *Nietzsche and Music*, as well they should.

The merely personal aspects of this infatuation and revulsion happen to be fascinating, but they do not much concern Liébert, a professor at the Institut d'Études Politiques in Paris, who comes armed with his intellectual elephant gun and has little use for anything but the biggest game. That would be fine, if only he were consistently able to hit what he is shooting at. Sometimes he is on target and the trophy is impressive, but at the critical moments he misses badly.

Nietzsche and Wagner first met in 1868, while Nietzsche was studying classical philology at the University of Leipzig. A year later Nietzsche, already a professor at Basel, was a regular visitor at Wagner's villa on Lake Lucerne. Nietzsche's first book, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), raises the extravagant hope that Wagner's operas would herald a German rebirth of the ancient Greek tragic spirit, the Dionysian spirit that honors the cruel but sublime unintelligibility of existence. This spirit has been suffocated by the Socratic presumption that "virtue is knowledge; man sins only from ignorance; he who is virtuous is happy," and Nietzsche indicts his age for "that Socratism which is bent on the destruction of myth. And now the mythless man stands eternally hungry, surrounded by all past ages, and digs and grubs for roots, even if he has to dig for them among the remotest antiquities." Resurrecting the old gods and heroes, promising national regeneration through "the fire magic of music," Wagner the mythmaker enthralled Nietzsche, who thought seriously about becoming a full-time promoter for Wagner's proposed music festival at Bayreuth.

About the time of the first such festival in 1876, however, disenchantment set in. The customary explanation for this comes from Nietzsche himself, who in 1888 remembered how disgusted he was when Wagner told him of his project for *Parsifal*; this abject prostration before the cross defiled the thrilling pagan hero-

Algis Valiunas *is a literary journalist and the author of* Churchill's Military Histories *(Rowman and Littlefield).*

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ism Nietzsche adored. Liébert has another explanation: Nietzsche conceived a distaste not just for Wagner but for music as such; a long phase of reverence for rationality subverted his original, spiritually frenetic passion for tragic mythopoeia.

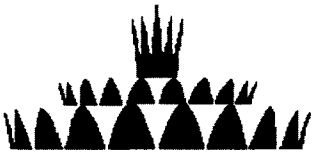
Liébert's argument is misguided on two counts: it utterly overlooks the nonphilosophical motives at work and gets even the philosophical motives wrong. Liébert is out to demolish the common view of Wagner as "the lone villain or bogeyman of an edifying history of music from Bach to Schoenberg," but to do that he must ignore much that is in plain sight. Wagner was among the foulest characters in the history of Western music. Despite Liébert's silence on the matter, Wagner was very much the malignant anti-Semite of legend—witness his notorious essay "Jewishness and Music," various recorded remarks (usually admiringly recorded), and a host of savage operatic portraits.

At first Nietzsche joined in the Jew-baiting *con brio*, as one learns from Joachim Köhler's *Nietzsche and Wagner: A Lesson in Subjugation*, which is short on music and philosophy but indispensable on Wagner's general nefariousness. Indeed, Nietzsche was so unrestrained in his public animadversions against the Jews that Wagner's mistress (later his wife), Cosima von Bülow, felt obliged to give him a lesson in discretion: there are indirect, coded ways of making one's point apparent. And the Wagners *always* made their point apparent. When Nietzsche made the mistake of introducing the Wagners to Paul Rée, a Jewish friend whom he thought they would find sympathetic, the couple made their disapproval clear. Rebellion ensued. Nietzsche would become a notable philo-Semite and a severe critic of Teutonic race fantasy.

Contributing to his estrangement from Wagner was the Master's continual insinuation that, with corrupt friends such as Rée, Nietzsche must be homosexual. Wagner went so far as to write Nietzsche's doctor to say that his protégé's gnawing ill health was caused by habitual masturbation, which men of his unfortunate disposition engaged in when they ought to get married and forget their youthful indiscretions. Nietzsche was syphilitic and given to ardent male friendships, but there is no evidence he was homosexual or shared Rousseau's addiction. The germ of his falling-out with his beloved Wagner lay in his growing awareness of Wagner's personal ignobility and malevolence.

There was more to it than that; these were terribly serious men, after all. In *The Case of Wagner* (1888), Nietzsche puts his finger on the source of his intellectual and spiritual antipathy toward Wagner: "his opera is the opera of redemption. Somebody or other always wants to be redeemed in his work: sometimes a male, sometimes a little female—this is his problem." It was a problem Nietzsche had no intention of making his own: to his mind, the one thing from which mankind needed to be redeemed was the need for redemption. From *The Birth of Tragedy* to his final works, Nietzsche taught men to emulate the careless surging energy of inhuman nature, indifferent to the assault of popgun morality, delighting in the play of light on spindrift phenomena, never protesting that life should be something other than it is.

Contrary to Liébert's argument, Nietzsche never became a rationalist after the Socratic or the Voltairean manner, and he essentially persisted in his early taste for Dionysian life enriched by myth and comprehended in music. His core doctrine of *amor fati*, love of fate, found its supreme expression in the myth of the eternal recurrence, the ultimate



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spiritual ordeal set forth in *The Gay Science* (1882) and amplified in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-1885) and *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886): if a demon were to perch on your shoulder and tell you your life would repeat itself throughout eternity, exactly the same in every detail, would you rejoice or despair at the thought? Here Nietzsche's mythic creation outshone even Wagner's.

Liébert struggles to make the case that Nietzsche was Wagner's spiritual inferior: critical rather than creative, brilliant only in fragments, incapable of sustained flights of thought. Liébert fails to see how Nietzsche's philosophic career was of a piece, how potent his own mythmaking capacity was, how his darting aphoristic style cohered with his conception of existence, in which the most honest theoretical man knows that the search for truth and not its supposed possession is the thing of supreme value. Nietzsche was a richer thinker than Wagner, and as fine an artist. No other post-Christian myth pierces the soul so profoundly as that of the eternal recurrence, and every other aspect of Nietzsche's thought radiates from it. Like Wagner, Nietzsche was capable of callow monstrosity in his thought and rhetoric, and certain of his epigones were as loathsome as Wagner's; indeed, the same Nazis who loved one usually loved the other. But of the two men there is no question who the superior was.

THAT DOESN'T MEAN that Nietzsche's judgments about Wagner are always to be trusted. In *Death-Devoted Heart: Sex and the Sacred in Wagner's* Tristan and Isolde, the English philosopher Roger Scruton begins by quarreling with Nietzsche's most famous dismissal of Wagner, in *The Case of Wagner*. There Nietzsche proclaimed the Wagnerian heroic to be strictly factitious: in order to understand his gods and heroes, one cannot take them at face value but must translate them "into reality, into the modern—let us be even crueler—into the bourgeois!" Scruton devotes his book to proving Nietzsche wrong, and he makes a strong case, at least as far as Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* is concerned.

Tristan is an opera with no place for mingy bourgeois compromise. The Cornish knight Tristan and the Irish princess Isolde are the most nobly intransigent souls to be found in modern art. He has killed her betrothed in combat, and despite her murderous hatred for him she has saved his life with her magical healing powers. In Act I, as he is taking her across the sea to Cornwall to marry his uncle King Marke, she tells her servant Brangaene to give him a lethal potion, but instead of the poison Brangaene concocts a love-potion, which both Tristan and Isolde drink. They instantly fall into erotic delirium. The fever rages throughout Act II, in which one of the most celebrated duets in opera declares the lovers' revolt against the daylight world of honor, glory, and renown; they will be priest and priestess of the night, in which, Scruton writes, "the dissolution of the self that occurs in love presages the final dissolution in death." Death soon approaches: Marke and his retainers break in on the lovers, and Melot wounds Tristan fatally. Act III portrays the transfiguration of sexual love into the saving embrace of death—the *Liebestod* which both lovers welcome.

Scruton repeatedly suggests that bourgeois listeners, comfortably or uncomfortably married, cannot but feel their erotic penury before a love so consuming that only death can fulfill it. Yet if this opera makes the life one is actually living seem insufferably mean, it also extends one's sense of life as it might be lived, and perhaps inspires one to recover the pristine ardor of first love, when one's beloved was a destiny and not merely a convenient appurtenance. The Wagnerian ideal of erotic hero-

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STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

1. Title of publication: FIRST THINGS

2. Publication No. 005476.

3. Date of Filing: Sept. 30, 2004

4. Frequency of issue: Monthly except combined issues June/July and August/September.

5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 10.

6. Annual Subscription Price: $34.

7. Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010-7002.

8. Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Offices of the Publisher: 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010-7002.

9. Names and Complete Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor. Publisher: Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010-7002. Editor-in-Chief: Richard John Neuhaus. Editor: Damon Linker. Managing Editor: Matthew Boudway. Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010-7002.

10. Owner: Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010-7002.

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None.

12. The Purpose, Function, and Nonprofit Status of this Organization and the Exempt Status for Federal Income Tax Purposes Has Not Changed During the Preceding 12 Months.

13. Publication Title: FIRST THINGS

14. Issue date for circulation data below:
Average: November 2003 through October 2004
Actual: October 2004

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation:	Avg. No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total No. copies (Net Press Run)	34,869	34,678
B. Paid Circulation		
1. Paid or Requested Outside county Mail Subscriptions	28,305	29,001
2. Paid in-county Subscriptions	—	—
3.Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, and Counter Sales	2,009	3,705
4. Other Classes	—	—
C. Total Paid Circulation (Sum of 15B1 and 15B3)	30,314	32,706
D. Free Distribution by Mail	426	416
E. Free Distribution outside the Mail	---	---
F. Total Free Distribution	426	416
G. Total Distribution	30,740	33,122
H. Copies Not Distributed	4,129	1,556
I. Total (Sum of G and H)	34,869	34,678
J. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	98.61	98.74

16. Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November 2004 issue of this Publication.

I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS
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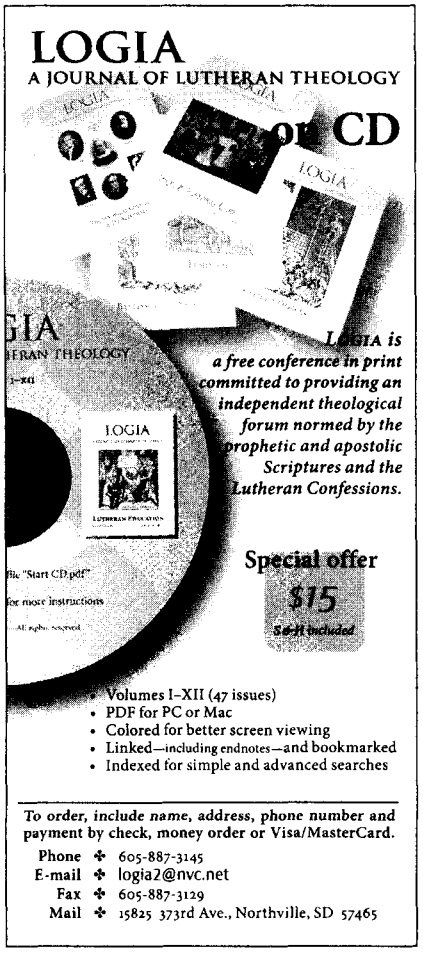
ism inflames ordinary men and women with the desire to live as though such love were possible even for themselves; for myth does not represent some archaic glory but is written "in the eternal present." Redemption through love is the end of Wagner's mythic teaching—but as he holds the sacred to be of purely human invention, it is "redemption by our own devices and without the aid of a god."

Scruton has prepared his brief with care. Medieval chivalric romance, Kantian ethics, anthropological mythography, and musicological close-work propel his sinuous but lucid argument. The end of that argument is that Wagner's innovative "anthropological thinking . . . which puts ritual in place of doctrine" was the seminal influence on artistic modernism, and that this modernism is the surest route we now know to the sacred.

Death-Devoted Heart is a breathtaking book; yet one is left wondering whether *Tristan und Isolde* and the works of Stravinsky, Rilke, Rodin, and Debussy (for which Scruton sees it preparing the way) penetrate anywhere near as deeply into the sacred as does, say, the work of the pre-modern Tolstoy, for whom the numinous is no human invention, and who in his finest works presents quite conventional married love, suffused by a sense of sacramental perdurability, as the great fount of earthly happiness and holiness. In *War and Peace*, the two chief couples achieve in marriage the supreme happiness that the adulterers and other lovers cannot; their initial erotic transports fade into comfortable habit but remain the basis of a solid and lasting love. In *Anna Karenina*, the sexual rapture of the adulterous Anna and Vronsky decays into grimness, recrimination, and suicide, while the married love of Levin and Kitty endures severe trial and even approaches religious ecstasy. As Levin listens to his wife in childbirth, his feelings are "like openings in that usual life through which something higher became visible." Levin, who is not a praying man, prays then, as he did in childhood, and when his son is born that flash of transcendence irradiates "the old everyday world" to which he returns.

Tristan and Isolde could not understand how their moment of nonpareil bliss, which Wagner renders in the most sensually rapturous music ever written, might sustain a lifetime's happiness in the everyday world. After peerless union such as theirs, death seems to offer the sole noble alternative to a gradual deterioration of their love. Tolstoy understood something essential that Wagner and Nietzsche did not: that the greatest part of love can survive and surpass even the most intense passion, and that what modern man most needs is not sublime myth but living truth.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Letter from the East

YOU ARE PETER: AN ORTHODOX THEOLOGIAN'S REFLECTION ON THE EXERCISE OF PAPAL PRIMACY. By OLIVIER CLÉMENT. Translated by M. S. LAIRD. Foreword by AVERY CARDINAL DULLES. *New City Press. 112 pp. $12.95 paper.*

Reviewed by Adam A. J. DeVille

THIS BOOK IS A RARE gem because it is one of the extraordinarily few Orthodox responses to the unprecedented invitation of Pope John Paul II, in his 1995 encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, to help him reconfigure his office as bishop of Rome so that it could once again be an instrument of unity. Listen once more to his request:

> I am convinced that I have a particular responsibility . . . to find a way of exercising the primacy which, while in no way renouncing what is essential to its mission, is nonetheless open to a new situation. I insistently pray the Holy Spirit to shine his light upon . . . all the Pastors and theologians of our Churches, that we may seek—together, of course—the forms in which this ministry may accomplish a service of love recognized by all concerned.

By November 2002, more than seven years after the encyclical was issued, the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity in Rome had put together a dossier of responses received to this request, noting that many Western Christians responded but that "there

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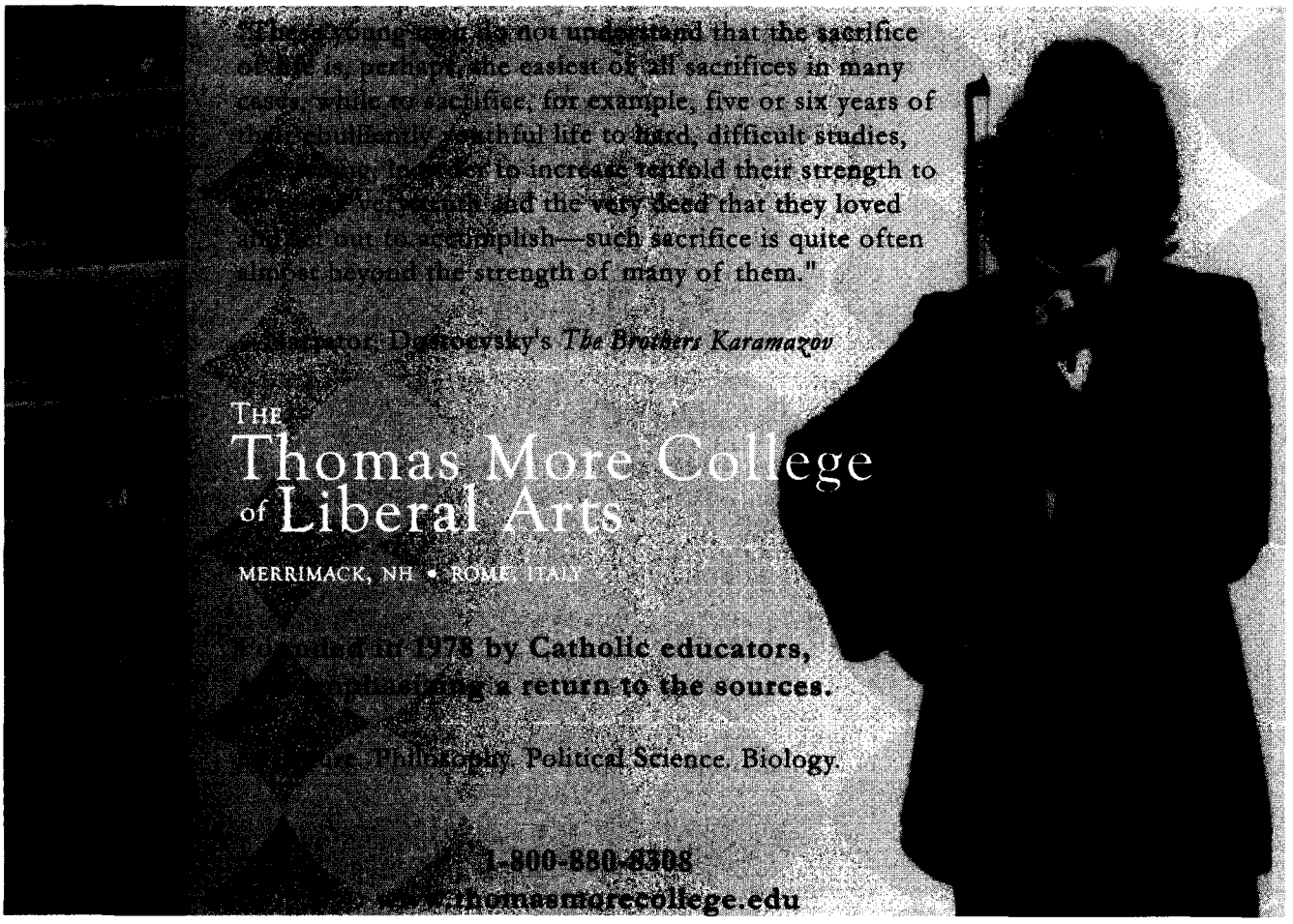
were no official answers from the Orthodox Churches." While Clément makes no claim to speak on behalf of his entire Church, his book is nonetheless important and is, as Avery Cardinal Dulles says in his foreword to the English edition (the French original was published in 1997 as *Rome autrement*), "almost exactly the kind of response for which Pope John Paul II was hoping." Clément, a theologian teaching at the Institut Saint-Serge in Paris, is a convert to Orthodoxy, not from some supposedly "native" French Catholicism as some imagine, but from atheism. He therefore has much less of the baggage that converts often bring, and he is able to write in a largely irenic and fraternal manner.

The first half of *You Are Peter* gives a very brief historical overview of the first millennium: the treatment of Peter in the Church Fathers; the role of the bishop of Rome in the early Church; the relationship between the Roman patriarchate and the other patriarchates in the pentarchy; and the tension between the early ecumenical councils and an inchoate sense of Roman primacy. About this last, he remarks: "the true greatness of the period of the ecumenical councils is precisely that the power of decision rested with no one: neither pope, nor council, nor emperor, nor public feeling."

In the second half of the book we move quickly from the first millennium to the First Vatican Council in the nineteenth century. Vatican I, however, had deep roots, going back as far as the Gregorian reforms of the eleventh century. From Gregory VII to Pius IX, Clément argues, "little by little . . . Roman primacy showed signs of becoming contaminated by the problem of power . . . [as] apostolic Rome appeared to have taken over from ancient imperial Rome." This is seen most clearly in the declaration of the thirteenth-century Pope Boniface VIII: "I am pope and emperor." Such statements could only call forth equally vigorous counter-polemics from the now-estranged Orthodox, and there is no shortage of those. Clément, for his part, issues a sober call for reform of *both* Roman *and* Orthodox ecclesiology.

He deals first with Rome, expressing the hope that "Rome, when God wills it, and by an operation of grace unique to her, will return to the authentic conception of primacy as the servant of communion, within a framework of genuine interdependence between her bishop and all


"The young man does not understand that the sacrifice of self is, perhaps, the easiest of all sacrifices in many cases, while to sacrifice, for example, five or six years of one's youthful, youthful life to hard, difficult studies,
and the very deed that they loved
—such sacrifice is quite often
almost beyond the strength of many of them."
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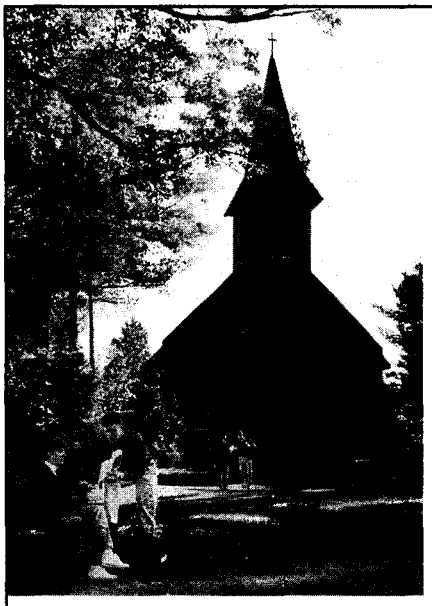
other bishops." There are signs of this return, including Pope Paul VI's giving away his tiara and disbanding the papal court, together with his stunning gesture in 1971 of dropping to the ground and kissing the foot of Metropolitan Meliton, delegate of the Ecumenical Patriarch.

Such signs have been multiplied and amplified by Pope John Paul II, especially in the years leading up to the Great Jubilee of 2000, which was replete with many gestures of repentance and reconciliation and many attempts at the healing of memories, culminating in the unprecedented Day of Pardon during Lent when the Pope asked forgiveness in the name of the Church for, inter alia, sins against Christian unity. Such gestures are what Clément calls (quoting a phrase from an 1895 encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarch) the "tears of Peter." Such tears—that is, signs of *metanoia*—are increasingly abundant, and Clément cites such examples as the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*; the 1995 apostolic letter *Orientale Lumen*, with its "remarkable grasp of the spiritual sensibilities of the East"; and the 1995 clarification by Rome that the much-vexed *filioque* is not a church-dividing issue but rather shows, in Clément's words, that "there are two differing approaches, of which both are legitimate and neither in any way contradicts the other."

While these "tears" have been significant, Clément suggests that there is still much work to be done. Such work, however, is not limited to the Roman Church. Clément is to be commended for his candor and sense of fair play in criticizing Orthodoxy as also being riven with numerous problems, including the continuing presence of the heresy of phyletism and incoherent practice of eucharistic ecclesiology, whose revival was much touted in the twentieth century by Nicholas Afanassieff and, recently, Metropolitan John Zizioulas.

The Russian theologian Nicholas Lossky has recently suggested that the revival of eucharistic ecclesiology has a long way to go before it overcomes the still prevalent "autocephalist ecclesiology" in which "relations among the 'sister churches' tend to resemble . . . the relations between sovereign states." Orthodoxy must, as Clément puts it, "overcome its fear, mistrust, and isolation," both internally and externally; it must grow out of what Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople has called its "anti-Catholic hysteria." The signs of such a growth are, Clément admits, often hard to discern on



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the Orthodox side, but he suggests that "the healing over of wounds has begun, and no longer just in the heart; for the first time its possibility is foreseen in the very structures of the Church."

On this matter of structural reforms in the Roman Church Clément makes several suggestions. First, he argues that "it is in no way essential . . . that the bishop of Rome should appoint the bishops of the entire world."

Second, it is equally unnecessary that the bishop of Rome's "administrative headquarters should be a sovereign territory . . . and in consequence maintain a diplomatic corps." (To the assertion that this arrangement secures for the papacy a necessary independence, Clément offers the rejoinder that "none of the great popes of the first eight centuries had at their command such a state. They bore witness to the independence of the Church through martyrdom if necessary. Today everything depends on the political and ideological situation of Italy and Western Europe.")

Third, there must be some clarification of the authority of the councils held in the West since Nicea II in 787. Later councils are plainly not "ecumenical" in the way the West continues to insist. Their decrees, therefore, carry a significantly different degree of authority and this must be clarified.

Fourth, there must be—Clément quotes John Paul himself as saying this—a papal primacy "with different gears" for different parts of the Church, so that ultimately the relationship between Catholicism and Orthodoxy is not one of jurisdiction but of the plenitude of communion as sisters. Such an approach does not mean a gutting of the papacy. "This does not mean that the pope must be merely a spokesman," Clément says. Rather, the pope would have significant authority as one to whom a "certain right of appeal" could be had (first granted the bishop of Rome by the Council of Sardica in the mid-fourth century), together with his responsibility for the "convocation of councils," over which he would preside and the decrees of which he would ratify.

In sum, then, Clément argues that "the one essential would be to pass from a situation where the hierarchical dovetailing of power structures has legal back-up to one where tensions are held in balance without predetermined juridical solutions."

SUCH ARE SOME of the reflections of Clément in response to Pope John

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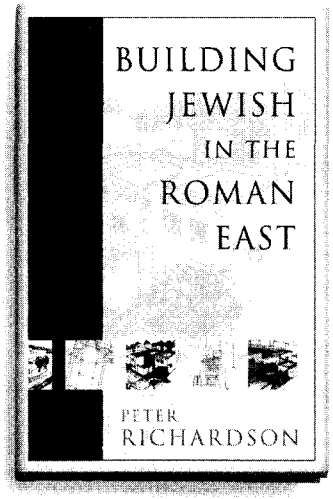

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Paul's request. They do not constitute a systematic program for reform or even an ordered checklist of Orthodox requirements but simply some reflections offered as part of an ongoing debate. As such, they are fair game for criticism, and Clément's text is not without its problems, the two main problems being, first, that Clément makes several sweeping claims that go against the grain of received scholarship and therefore require evidence (which he fails to provide), and, second, that he goes off on strange tangents, of which his postscript is the most egregious example.

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In the first category we have the hoary tale of what Clément calls "the annexation by Rome of vast Orthodox territories under the cover of uniatism." This remains *the* most poisonous charge of Orthodoxy against Catholicism, especially in western Ukraine, and the international Orthodox-Catholic joint dialogue has nearly collapsed under the strain of it. It is disappointing to see Clément repeat it, not only because Rome has dealt with this question in the 1993 Balamand Statement of the joint dialogue, but especially because recent scholarship has demolished these charges.

In the second category are Clément's excursuses unconnected to his essay and filled with an exquisite condescension one typically associates with such as Hans Küng or the *New York Times*. Commenting on reforms in the Church of Rome after the Second Vatican Council, Clément retails the standard leftist line that "things became more complex with John Paul II. Whatever his original dispositions, John Paul II has been deeply marked by his collision with the Marxian influence (Marxian rather than Marxist, but he has failed to make the distinction—a measure of his lack of fully understanding it)." The book's postscript is its most regrettable feature—a long, rambling, fevered rumination on war, evil, technological changes, the environment, and the future of Christianity—all topics that have been better addressed elsewhere.

But these flaws do not mar the originality of the main text or the importance of its contribution to that "fraternal dialogue" for which the ever-patient John Paul called in 1995. Whether Clément's example will prod his more reticent Orthodox brethren into responding remains to be seen. Whether Rome heeds any of his suggestions also remains to be seen. But the dialogue has begun, and for it to continue there must be more interlocutors like Olivier Clément.

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What's Upstairs

TOTAL TRUTH: LIBERATING CHRISTIANITY FROM ITS CULTURAL CAPTIVITY.
By NANCY PEARCEY.
Crossway. 479 pp. $25.

Reviewed by Francis J. Beckwith

IT IS DIFFICULT to imagine an encounter in the public square in which one party dismisses the view of the other on the grounds that it is "just science" or "merely the deliverances of empirical proof." This is difficult to imagine because there is beneath what is called the "culture wars" an epistemological division of labor which tells us that science or empirical knowledge is about facts and religion or theology is about opinion.

In *Total Truth*, Nancy Pearcey diagnoses the intellectual pathologies that resulted in the epistemological division that we see embodied in the culture wars. These pathologies are the result of interdependent social, philosophical, scientific, and religious movements that helped to reinforce the notion of what Pearcey calls a two-tiered view of truth. This notion, which she learned from her mentor, the late Francis A. Schaeffer, asserts that claims of truth in our culture are like a two-story building. In the lower story is the cognitive stuff that counts as real knowledge: science, reason, data. In the upper story is the noncognitive stuff that gives life meaning, but it is ultimately nonrational and therefore deeply personal and incapable of being judged or assessed by third parties. According to Schaeffer and Pearcey, the upper story is where modern people place religion, aesthetic judgment, and

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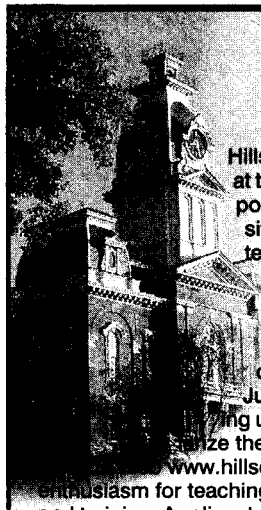

HISTORY
Faculty Positions

Hillsdale College invites applications for two full-time positions at the rank of Assistant Professor, beginning August, 2005. One position is tenure-track. The second position is a three-year position with the possibility of becoming tenure-track. The tenure-track position is for an American historian, preferably with the ability to teach the colonial and founding periods. The three-year position is open to all fields. Salary competitive. PhD required. Hillsdale College is a small (1200 students) fiercely independent college of liberal arts, committed to the Western tradition and informed by Judeo-Christian religion, and dedicated to excellence in teaching undergraduate students. Applicants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the college's mission statement on the World Wide Web at www.hillsdale.edu. The successful candidates will be generalists with enthusiasm for teaching freshmen, as well as courses in their main area of interest and training. Applicants should be aware that at least one-half of their teaching load will require teaching in the freshman core curriculum, which includes courses in the Western and the American Heritage. Send a letter of application that presents (a) evidence of strong undergraduate teaching skills, (b) a discussion of the philosophy behind such teaching, and (c) a detailed response to the Hillsdale College Mission Statement that includes a discussion of the candidate's ability to teach in light of the College's commitments. The application must also include a curriculum vitae, three up-to-date letters of recommendation, and transcripts. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the positions are filled. Send all application materials to **Dr. Mark A. Kalthoff, Chairman, Department of History and Political Science, Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, MI 49242. EOE**

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even moral judgments that are deeply private affairs (such as whether to have an abortion or engage in sodomy). The combination of Baconian science and Enlightenment skepticism (beginning with Descartes), followed by American Protestant revivalism, Darwinism, scientism, Pragmatism, and theological liberalism, produced, according to Pearcey, the potent two-story view of truth that is widely accepted, and rarely disputed, in the contemporary world. This is why it is a far worse social blunder to announce that one's religious views are true (in the lower-story sense), and thus normative for all people, than it is to affirm something completely irrational that is "just my opinion."

This understanding of knowledge, writes Pearcey, has had a deleterious effect upon our social institutions, their role in preserving and advancing the public good, and our ability to make a case for them in the public square. For once one detaches knowledge of the good—an immaterial object that cannot be detected via sense experience or scientific instruments—from what counts as knowledge of the order and nature of things, then positions that are contingent upon the veracity of nonempirical knowledge of immaterial objects are ruled untenable according to the criterion of public reason, which is itself just a proxy for reasons that support conclusions consistent with a materialist understanding of reality. And yet the materialist, as Pearcey points out, is incapable of giving an account of the veracity of his own perspective without relying on basic beliefs about the structure and nature of the world and reason that rely on nonempirical immaterial realities more at home in a theistic worldview.

Consider a version of what Pearcey and others call "Darwin's Doubt." In order to offer an argument in defense of his point of view, the materialist must be free to draw inferences derived from reasons. That is, he must have the ability to think, to exercise the powers of a rational agent. But according to the materialist, reasoning is an activity of the brain, a wholly material entity, like the kidney or large intestine, that is subject to the forces of natural selection and random mutation, not to mention the laws of physics and chemistry. But if reasoning is the result of "nonrational" causes, the deliverances of "reason," including the reasoning on which materialism is based, cannot be trusted. If while I'm playing Scrabble the letters randomly spell "materialism is true," should I change my belief and embrace materialism? Of course not, for this collection of letters is the result of nonrational forces or chance. But if the brain's "reasoning" is like the random string of Scrabble letters, then its apparent deliverances—including the claim that materialism is true—are arrived at in no more rational a fashion than the phrase "materialism is true" on the Scrabble board.

Although Pearcey is an evangelical Protestant, she does not exempt her own tradition from critique. She correctly points out that the evangelical emphasis on individual conversion experience and personal relationship to Christ, especially as these notions are found in the anti-creedal churches that have come out of the revivalist tradition, makes it easier for evangelicals to assume the correctness of a cultural paradigm that requires a two-tier view of knowledge.

There is, however, one aspect of *Total Truth* with which I found myself in disagreement. Pearcey defends the claim made by some Reformed Protestant thinkers

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In May of 2003, Pope John Paul II approved this Vatican statement: "No ideology can erase from the human spirit the certainty that marriage exists solely between a man and a woman." Furthermore, "In those situations where homosexual unions have been legally recognized or have been given the legal status and rights belonging to marriage, clear and emphatic opposition [by Catholics] is a duty."

When the idea of marriage as the union of a husband and wife is labelled by courts as "discrimination," people who teach the Catholic faith will be treated like bigots in the public square. The consequences for Catholic institutions are likely to be grave. In Massachusetts a group of distinguished Catholic legal scholars (including Harvard Law Professor Mary Ann Glendon) recently warned about the coming legal threat: "Precedent from our own history and that of other nations suggests that religious institutions could even be at risk of losing tax-exempt status, academic accreditation, and media licenses, and could face charges of violating human rights codes or hate speech laws."

In redefining marriage as a unisex relationship, the law would send a terrible message to the next generation: children do not need mothers and fathers, and marriage has nothing to do with its great, historic, cross-cultural purpose of making the next generation and giving all of our children the love and care of both their mother and father.

We, the undersigned, are Catholics from both political parties, and no political party. We urge our fellow Catholics, and all legislators of good will, to protect our children, our country, and our institutions by voting to protect the special status of marriage as the union of one husband and one wife. — *Signed:**

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(including Schaeffer) that Thomas Aquinas' view of grace and nature is flawed because he held that "grace meant theology or the mysteries of faith (the upper story), while nature meant knowledge of this-worldly things, supposedly known by unaided reason apart from divine revelation (the lower story)." So, according to Pearcey, Aquinas put in place, though not intentionally, an epistemological foundation upon which the two-story model could be constructed (a model that Pearcey correctly decries and that Aquinas himself would have rejected).

Although Pearcey cites several Protestant and Catholic scholars to make her case, and although her presentation is more nuanced and careful than what has been offered by Schaeffer and other Reformed thinkers, I believe she is mistaken in her reading of Aquinas. For Aquinas, there are things that can be known by reason, things that can be known by faith, and things that can be known by both or either. For example, the periodic table can be known by reason, the Trinity can be known only by special revelation (faith), and God's existence can be known by reason (the Five Ways) and faith (revelation), though things known by faith alone can never be contrary to reason. There is no two-tier view of knowledge for Aquinas, for objects of faith are truly known and may count against someone's

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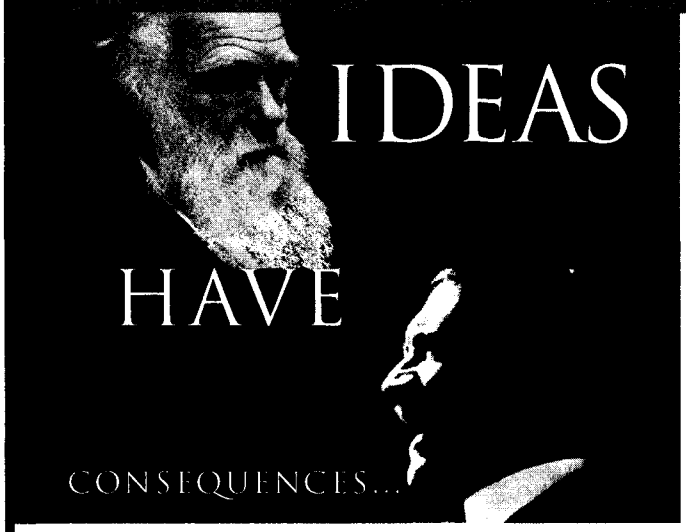

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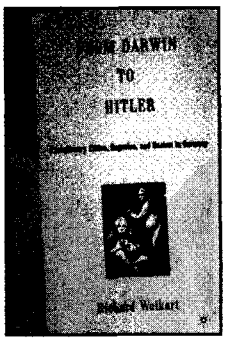

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apparent deliverances of "reason," and it is the job of the philosopher to show that such deliverances are in fact against reason.

The difference between objects of faith and objects of reason for Aquinas is not in their status as objects of knowledge, but in how the knowledge is acquired by the human mind. Take, for example, the case of God's existence and nature. According to Aquinas, one can know through reason that there is an eternally existing necessary and personal agent that is the first cause of all that contingently exists. But that such a being is a Trinity—three persons and one eternal substance—is something revealed in special revelation, Scripture, and is not the result of the deliverances of reason. Still, in rebutting the charge that the Trinity is against reason, the philosopher may offer conceptual clarity to the skeptic and show that the doctrine is not incoherent or irrational. In that sense, the philosopher is showing that that which is known by faith (the Trinity) is not contrary to reason, even as he maintains that God's existence is known by both reason and faith and is thus contrary to neither.

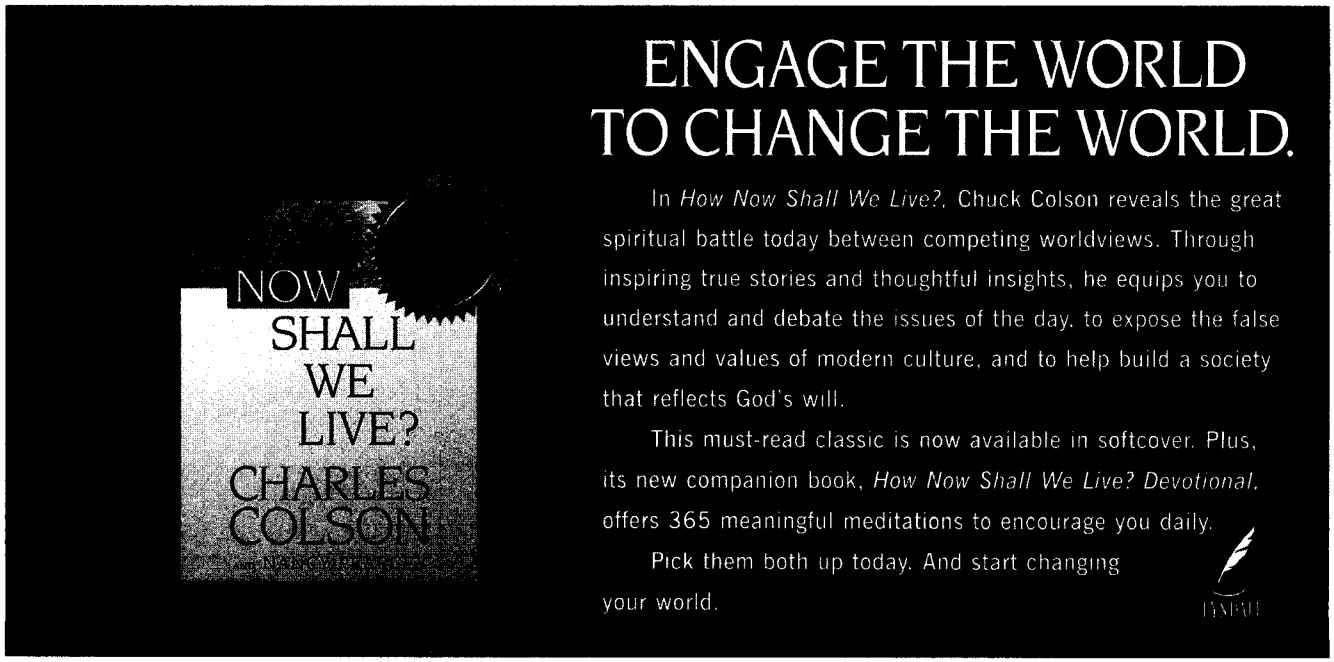
Neither reason nor faith is technically unaided for Aquinas. Our natural faculties and their basic capacities and powers are brought about by God's design. Although they have been corrupted by the Fall, they are still able to acquire some knowledge of God and morality without the aid of special revelation, though they are fallible (due to the Fall) and incapable of acquiring the specific knowledge of God and morality that they do not have the natural power to acquire, e.g., that God is a Trinity, that salvation is through Christ, and so on. Revelation is necessary in order for humanity to acquire this latter knowledge.

Fortunately, one can detach Pearcey's comments on Aquinas (which play a small part in her overall case) without in any way diluting the power of her message. This is a rich and readable book. It is an atlas of the intellectual geography of the culture war that divides American society today. Pearcey connects, with uncanny insight, the ideas and characters that have shaped our intellectual history and made possible the secular-religious dichotomy that defines so much of contemporary politics, law, religion, and science. Although one may find oneself disagreeing with Pearcey at points, there is no doubt that *Total Truth* is the product of a gifted writer and thinker who can help us to demolish the cramped and confining two-story model in favor of a new home more in keeping with the capacious and uniform character of truth.

Briefly Noted

Freedom Just Around the Corner: A New American History 1585-1828.
By Walter A. McDougall.
HarperCollins. 638 pp. $29.95.

In this first installment of a projected three-volume national history, Walter McDougall, whose panoramic history of the Space Age won the Pulitzer Prize, surveys the shifting landscape and shifty characters of early America. Hoping to steer between extremes of national censure and celebration, McDougall portrays Americans as inveterate "hustlers," in both senses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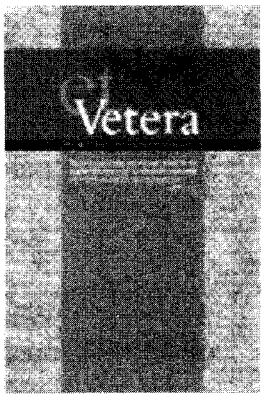
of the word. No slouch himself, the author has mastered an astonishing range of specialized scholarship and presents it as the engaging story of dynamic individuals rather than the product of abstract forces. His emphasis upon the energizing effect of New World opportunities recalls Daniel Boorstin's lively trilogy *The Americans*, completed a generation ago. The heroes are similar: Winthrop, Franklin, Madison, and a gallery of lesser-known inventors and go-getters. So are the happy paradoxes ("creative corruption"), the lucid explanations of how things are produced, and the vivid pocket biographies. McDougall, like Boorstin, moves Indians and African Americans off to the side as he profiles those closer to political power—an exclusion less forgivable after three decades of new social history. Yet from the outset McDougall sees a dark side to unbridled individualism that Boorstin began to glimpse only in his third volume. Thus *Freedom Just Around the Corner* opens by invoking Twain's *Connecticut Yankee* and closes with Fenimore Cooper's democratic dystopia, *The Crater*. The double-edged theme works especially well for religion. Attuned to the risk of marrying the Word and the world, McDougall notes that when Protestant revivalists from Whitefield to Finney replaced original sin with millennial perfectionism, they opened new possibilities for reform, but they also reassured Americans that hustling was nothing to feel guilty about. McDougall leaves Jacksonian Americans wondering whether their experiment in freedom "would end in apotheosis or apocalypse." One suspects that volume three will close with twenty-first century Americans in much the same position. Those who share McDougall's passion for storytelling and his bemusement in the face of human imperfection will look forward to seeing how he gets them there.

—Carl J. Guarneri

The Privileged Planet. By Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay W. Richards. *Regnery. 464 pp. $27.95.*

The slogan that "there is nothing special about the earth" is an assumption, rooted in atheism, that scientists such as Carl Sagan have publicized as the Copernican Principle, on this dubious logic: it follows from the fact that the earth orbits the sun that a mindless process of stellar evolution must have filled the cosmos with innumerable planets every bit as fitted for harboring life as our earth.



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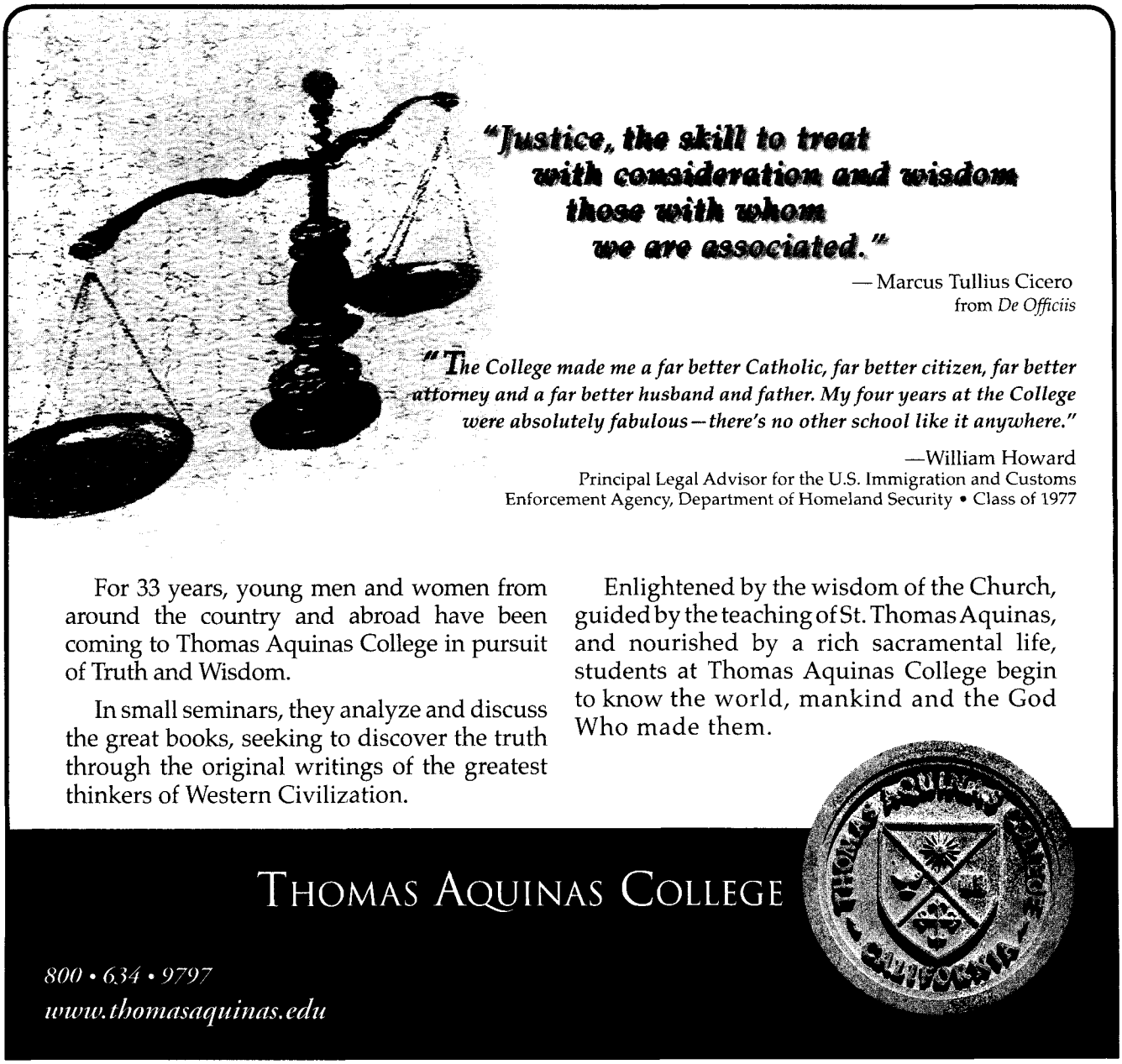
Although most scientists today take that prejudice for granted, Copernicus never asserted such a principle, much less proved it, and the great Polish Catholic astronomer would surely be pleased that astronomer Guillermo Gonzalez and philosopher Jay Richards have rescued him from a tradition of misinterpretation. *The Privileged Planet* demonstrates in lucid prose with meticulously detailed evidence that the earth actually does seem to be a very unusual planet, with its clear atmosphere, happily positioned satellite, and favorable position in both the solar system and the galaxy. All these fortunate factors (and many more) had to come together to make the earth habitable, and the combination of beneficial coincidences is unlikely to have been repeated elsewhere. Even more startling is the fact that, in the authors' words, "habitability correlates with measurability." This means that the same factors that combine to make the earth habitable also make our planet uniquely suitable for making astronomical observations. There is no apparent reason why habitability and measurability should be so correlated, unless a creator wanted us not only to live but also to be able to explore the cosmos scientifically. This highly original book relies on orthodox scientific data, but the authors' imaginative reinterpretation could dispose of much accumulated prejudice and make possible a new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and far more realistic understanding of our place in the cosmos and in the mind of its Creator.

—*Phillip E. Johnson*

Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity.
By Andrea Sterk.
Harvard University Press.
368 pp. $45.

The bishop and the monk have different vocations. The responsibility of the former is to oversee the Christian community, to preside at worship, to teach; the calling of the latter is to seek God in prayer and solitude. Accordingly, in monastic lore the greatest temptation of the monk was ordination. Yet in the late fourth century the way of life of the monk was adopted by many of the leading bishops of the Church. Andrea Sterk's fine book is an examination of this transformation in the Eastern Church in the early Byzantine period (the West would require another study), as the life of these isolated and world-renouncing monastics became a normative model for leadership in the post-Constantinian epoch. *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church*, though historical in conception and execution, is eerily prescient. Between the lines there seems to be an implicit suggestion that this ancient ideal, the ascetic bishop, one who has purged his passions and seen God, is as relevant today as it was fifteen hundred years ago.

—*Robert Louis Wilken*

Alexander Hamilton.
By Ron Chernow.
Penguin. 818 pp. $35.

Stocks in the reputations of the Founders, as is the way with stocks in anything, go up and down. In the last few years, Jefferson has been a big loser, with John Adams and now, thanks to Mr. Chernow, Hamilton on the rise. It is not evident that it required more than 800 pages, but Chernow effectively depicts the stunning ambition, talent, and devotion that impelled a foreign-born youngster of disreputable background to the heights of influence in the War of Independence and, most importantly, in the shaping of the way in which the polity established by the Constitution would actually govern itself. As in David McCullough's *John Adams*, Jefferson is portrayed as a sly, self-serving, and even cowardly figure who indulged fanatical fantasies about the promise of the French Revolution while Hamilton and Washington coped with putting together a nation that works. Chernow makes much of Hamilton's abolitionist convictions in contrast to Jefferson's hypocrisy in spouting liberty while living off the sweat of his slaves. Especially affecting is the telling of Hamilton's moral qualms about the duel with Aaron Burr in which he was fatally wounded, and his last hours of yearning for religious solace. *Alexander Hamilton* will undoubtedly take its deserved place as a standard reference on the founding era of the American experiment.

Inside: A Public and Private Life.
By Joseph A. Califano, Jr.
Public Affairs. 539 pp. $30.

Once called LBJ's "vice president for domestic affairs," and serving as secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare under Jimmy Carter, Joe Califano has led a life of hard-driving ambition to be "inside" wherever the public action is. Also weaving in and out of this memoir, however, are the ponderings of a Brooklyn boy trying to figure out what it means to be faithful to the Catholicism of his early formation. Califano provides a lively recounting of the political battles of the 1960s and '70s, and of his later leadership in the abolitionist movement against tobacco and drug use. As in most memoirs, there is score-settling here, but none of it is vicious—except, possibly, in the treatment of

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former governor Mario Cuomo, who will not, as many others undoubtedly will, enjoy this book.

The Forgotten.
By Christopher Lawrence Zugger.
Syracuse University Press.
552 pp. $39.95.

Those who the author insists should not be forgotten are the Catholics of the Soviet Union under the great terror from Lenin through Stalin. There were one million in 1925 and twelve million by 1991, despite their fierce persecution and many martyrs. Even in the worst of times, sad to say, competition and resentments continue between Christians, notably with the Orthodox. *The Forgotten* is suggestive of the many dramas that could not be included in more general histories, such as Anne Applebaum's recent and admirable *Gulag*, but are deserving of their own respected place in our memories.

Knocking on Heaven's Door: American Religion in the Age of Counterculture.
By Mark Oppenheimer.
Yale University Press. 284 pp. $30.

The author celebrates the creativity, adaptability, and insatiable appetite for change in American religion. Some groups are ahead of others. Unitarian Universalists established an Office on Gay Affairs as early as 1973, and Episcopalians were on the cutting edge of ordaining women. Catholicism, too, despite its stodgy oppressive hierarchy, moved into the liturgical future, as "sandals, guitars, and hugging seized the day." The book appears to be based on Mr. Oppenheimer's doctoral thesis, which must have been written a very long time ago.

Memory, History, Forgetting.
By Paul Ricoeur. *University of Chicago Press. 640 pp. $40.*

One of the world's most admired philosophers, who has made formative contributions on questions related to biblical narrative and conflicted notions of the self, here traverses the interstices of continental philosophies on the complex relationships between the subjects of his title. Ricoeur brings a Husserlian phenomenological perspective to bear

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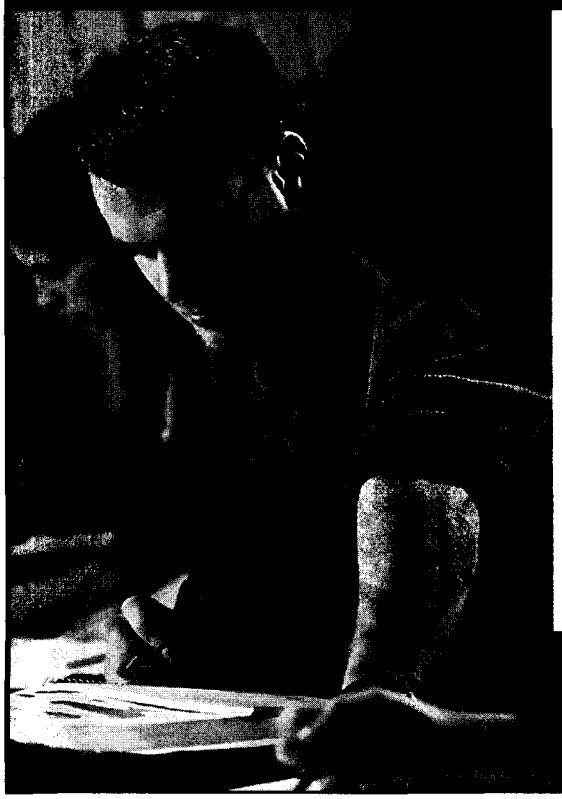

The second-century church father Tertullian famously asked

What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?
What has the Academy to do with the Church?

These questions have resonated over Christian learning for centuries, directing the mind to the relationship between faith and intellect, prompting the reflective believer to consider what it means to be faithful in culture and society.

The Jerusalem and Athens Forum is a new honors program at Gordon College that gives promising students the opportunity to explore these issues through reading classic Christian literature and lively discussion periods with faculty and peers.

The **Jerusalem and Athens Forum** is directed by Thomas Albert Howard, Ph.D., University of Virginia. Sister programs include **Christianity, Character and Culture**, a first-year introduction program to Christianity and the liberal arts, directed by Bruce Webb, Ph.D., Clark University; and **The Church Vocation Institute**, a program designed to identify and develop future church leaders directed by Greg Carmer, Ph.D., Boston College.

These programs are funded in part by a grant from the Lilly Endowment.

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on Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida, and other usual suspects in a tour de force that will be of particular interest to other philosophers. The last third of the book, and especially an extended epilogue dealing with memory, forgetting, and forgiving, is more accessible to the general reader. Of particular value are the author's reflections on the limits of forgetting and "commanded forgetting" in the case of legal amnesties for the "founding violence" of societies and crimes against humanity.

PILGRIMS ON THE SAWDUST TRAIL.
Edited by TIMOTHY GEORGE.
Baker. 235 pp. $19.99 paper.

Ecumenism is a word that is alien to many evangelical Protestants. In fact, evangelicalism frequently identifies itself in opposition to the "ecumenical" Christian bodies. This book, generated by a conference at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama, demonstrates the depth and breadth of changes underway. It is dedicated to two prominent leaders of Evangelicals and Catholics Together, Avery Cardinal Dulles and J. I. Packer, describing them as "theologians of unity-in-truth," and citing the maxim usually attributed to the seventeenth-century Richard Baxter, "In necessary things, unity; in disputed things, liberty; in all things, charity." Contributors include Joel Carpenter, Richard Mouw, Gabriel Fackre, Richard John Neuhaus, and Thomas Oden. This book, with its informative foreword by historian Mark Noll, serves as a valuable introduction to the ways in which evangelical Protestants are thinking about their relationship with other Christians.

HEROIC LEADERSHIP.
By CHRIS LOWNEY.
Loyola. 335 pp. $24.95.

Lowney left the Jesuits to join the world of finance but, like many former Jesuits and laymen who boast of being "Jesuit educated," is still much taken with the mystique of the Society of Jesus. The book purports to be the success story of the Society guided by four Ignatian "leadership pillars"—self-awareness, ingenuity, love, and heroism. In a time when the number of ex-Jesuits has exploded and the number of active Jesuits has plummeted, when new recruits (outside India)

The Age of Unenlightenment

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A History of Putative Ideas & Hoaxes in Camouflage

By Eric Blair

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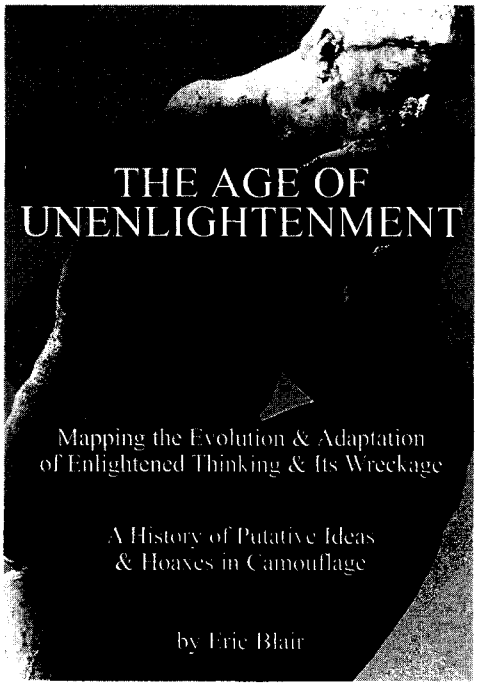
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are almost nonexistent and the Society can no longer man its educational institutions and other apostolates, *Heroic Leadership* is both counterintuitive and counterfactual. The book is published by a Jesuit press and strongly endorsed by current leaders of the Society. They apparently agree with Mr. Lowrey that they have the right leadership principles.

THE MEANING OF EVERYTHING: THE STORY OF THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY.
By SIMON WINCHESTER.
Oxford University Press. 304 pp. $25.

After Mr. Winchester had written the best-selling *The Professor and the Madman*, the remarkable story of how an imprisoned murderer helped James Murray edit the Oxford English Dictionary, he obviously had all kinds of unused material left over. *The Meaning of Everything* is not as gripping a tale, but it is a very readable light history of the OED from its nineteenth-century beginnings up to its present state of open-ended revision and expansion. This is a book to be relished by lovers of words. And one comes away from it with enhanced admiration for James Murray, who, as a good Calvinist, had no doubt about his being predestined to direct this extraordinary undertaking.

ONE FAITH: THE EVANGELICAL CONSENSUS.
Edited by J. I. PACKER and THOMAS C. ODEN.
InterVarsity. 222 pp. $17.

An annotated collection of confessional statements from a wide array of evangelical Protestant sources. In their extended commentary the editors contend, and the collection demonstrates, that notoriously fissiparous evangelical enthusiasms are, in recent decades, converging in a creedal affirmation of the Great Tradition grounded in Scripture as authoritatively interpreted by the early fathers and councils of the Church. The convergence is far from complete but it is impressive and it is growing, which augurs well for the future of Christian witness in the world.

THE REFORMATION: A HISTORY.
By DIARMAID MACCULLOCH.
Viking. 789 pp. $34.95.

A marvelously detailed but, for the most part, conventional account of the Reformation as the bloody precursor of modernity. Despite his obvious knowledge to the contrary, MacCulloch, an Oxford historian, follows the story line of the wars of religion as being dominantly about religion and Christianity's slow learning of the virtues of tolerance. Nonetheless, the detail and colorful depiction of main actors, especially in the Counter-Reformation and in Queen Mary's effort to restore Catholicism in England, makes the book a pleasure to read. Exercising the virtue of tolerance, skip lightly over the anachronistically correct discussions of sexuality.

THE DESIGN REVOLUTION: ANSWERING THE TOUGHEST QUESTIONS ABOUT INTELLIGENT DESIGN.
By WILLIAM A. DEMBSKI.
InterVarsity. 334 pp. $22.

Although more dogmatic Darwinists stubbornly try to ignore it, the Intelligent Design (ID) argument has changed the way many thinkers understand the world. Dembski is one of the pioneers of ID and here develops positions advanced earlier, also in these pages, in specific response to the most common objections to, and suspicions of, the ID project. This is a necessary reference for those who are attentive to never-ending debates about creation, evolution, design, and purpose in history.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion, Culture, and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

EPISCOPAL STRAIGHT TALK

Last month I discussed the signs of an emerging new leadership within the conference of Catholic bishops. Such signs were evident in the June meeting of the bishops, where efforts to evade or delay taking a clear position on pro-abortion Catholics in public life were decisively turned back. The statement issued by the June meeting, "Catholics in Political Life," was not as clear or as firm as the guidelines sent to the bishops for their consideration by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Because of maneuverings by some conference leaders, the bishops were not permitted to take Cardinal Ratzinger's communication fully into account. Nonetheless, the June statement strongly challenged every bishop to address the grave scandal of Catholic public officials who publicly and persistently defy moral principle and Catholic teaching with respect to the protection of innocent human life.

Since June, many bishops have addressed this question with statements of their own or statements issued jointly with other bishops. Among the more noteworthy statements is that published by Archbishop John Donoghue of Atlanta, Georgia; Bishop Robert Baker of Charleston, South Carolina; and Bishop Peter Jugis of Charlotte, North Carolina. Herewith the full text, entitled "A Manifest Lack of Proper Disposition for Holy Communion," followed by an observation or three:

> As bishops, we have the obligation to teach and guide the Catholic faithful whom we shepherd in the body of Christ. A fundamental teaching of our Church is respect for the sacred gift of life. This teaching flows from the natural law and from divine revelation.
>
> Life is a gift bestowed upon us by God, a truth underscored by the commandment: "You shall not kill" (Deuteronomy 5:17). The Old Testament also teaches us that human life in the womb is precious to God: "I formed you in the womb" (Jeremiah 1:5). The right to life is a value "which no individual, no majority, and no state can ever create, modify, or destroy but must only acknowledge, respect, and promote" (Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 71a). A law, therefore, which legitimizes the direct killing of innocent human beings through abortion is intrinsically unjust, since it is directly opposed to the natural law, to God's revealed commandments, and to the consequent right of every individual to possess life from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death.
>
> Catholics in political life have the responsibility to exemplify in their public service this teaching of the Church and to work for the protection of all innocent life. There can be no contradiction between the values bestowed by baptism and the Catholic faith, and the public expression of those values. Catholic public officials who consistently support abortion on demand are cooperating with evil in a public manner. By supporting pro-abortion legislation they participate in manifest grave sin, a condition which excludes them from admission to Holy Communion as long as they persist in the pro-abortion stance (cf. Canon 915).

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Holy Communion is where Catholics meet as a family in Christ, united by a common faith. Every Catholic is responsible for being properly prepared for this profound union with Christ. Participation in Holy Communion requires certain dispositions on the part of the communicant, namely, perseverance in the life of grace and communion in the faith of the Church, in the sacraments and in the hierarchical order of the Church (Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 35-38).

The Church also recognizes that there is a manifest lack of a proper disposition for Holy Communion in those whose outward conduct is "seriously, clearly, and steadfastly contrary" to the Church's moral teaching (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 37b). A manifest lack of proper disposition for Holy Communion is found to be present in those who consistently support pro-abortion legislation. Because support for pro-abortion legislation is gravely sinful, such persons should not be admitted to Holy Communion.

We also take this opportunity to address all Catholics whose beliefs and conduct do not correspond to the Gospel and to Church teaching. To receive the great gift of God—the body, blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ—we must approach Holy Communion free from mortal sin. Those who are conscious of being in a state of grave sin should avail themselves of the sacrament of reconciliation before coming to Holy Communion. To partake of the Eucharist is to partake of Christ himself, and to enter into sacramental communion with our Lord we must all be properly disposed.

Because of the influence that Catholics in public life have on the conduct of our daily lives and on the formation of our nation's future, we declare that Catholics serving in public life espousing positions contrary to the teaching of the Church on the sanctity and inviolability of human life, especially those running for or elected to public office, are not to be admitted to Holy Communion in any Catholic Church within our jurisdictions: the Archdiocese of Atlanta, the dioceses of Charleston and Charlotte. Only after reconciliation with the Church has occurred, with the knowledge and consent of the local bishop, and public disavowal of former support for procured abortion, will the individual be permitted to approach the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

We undertake this action to safeguard the sacred dignity of the most Holy Sacrament of the altar, to reassure the faithful and to save sinners.

In sharp contrast to the above statement by Archbishop Donoghue, et al., some episcopal statements issued since the June meeting have shied away from or categorically rejected the discipline of nonadmission to Holy Communion. These statements typically contain three arguments: 1) The Church cannot judge the state of the soul of anyone coming to the altar; 2) Refusing Communion has the appearance and probable effect of being politically partisan; 3) Refusing Communion undermines the episcopal dialogue with offending politicians for which the June statement rightly calls. These arguments cannot bear close examination.

Regarding the first, the above statement and Cardinal Ratzinger's guidelines underscore that the question is not about the private state of one's soul, where decisions must be made in conscience by each person, but is about public and objective sin. For instance, a person may in conscience—albeit a wrongly formed conscience—support racial segregation or the cloning of human beings. Such a person may be, to use a traditional phrase, invincibly ignorant, suffering from a serious impairment of intellect or will. We should have sympathy for such a person, but that does not change the fact that his position is objectively wrong and sinful. The person who knowingly, publicly, and persistently supports the unlimited abortion license has objectively violated his *communio* with the Church and excluded himself from the Communion in which that *communio* is sacramentally enacted. The duty of the ministry of the Church is simply to alert a person to what he has done to himself with respect to the *communio* of the Church. As for the state of the inner sanctum of his soul, that is for God alone to judge. The decision for the ministers of the Church is about, as the title of the above text puts it, "a manifest lack of proper disposition for Holy Communion."

The second argument offered by some bishops has an element of truth. Refusing Communion to offending politicians may have the appearance and effect of being politically partisan. But are not bishops who offer this argument the ones who are surrendering the Church's witness to political partisanship? After all, it is the Democratic Party that has made don't-give-an-inch support for the abortion license the litmus test for party leadership. Is the Church impotent to protest a great evil because a major political party has embraced that great evil? Moreover, there are more than enough pro-abortion Catholics who are Republican and in urgent need of disciplinary attention from their bishops. The integrity of the Church, her faith, and her sacraments is the proper business of bishops. Attending

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to political perceptions and consequences, while not unimportant, is nowhere to be found in the rite of episcopal ordination.

The Purpose of Dialogue

Third, there is the matter of dialogue. Dialogue most certainly, but dialogue about what? Dialogue about whether or how moral truth and the Church's teaching will be changed? Dialogue about whether knowing, public, and persistent rejection of the Church's teaching is compatible with being in full communion with the Church? These questions have been settled for centuries. One might as usefully dialogue about whether Proust can posthumously be elected pope. (You can no doubt supply your own analogy.) Of course there can be dialogue about why the Church teaches what she does, about why many people, including Catholics, have problems with her teaching, about the exigencies and pressures entailed in the political life, and about much else. But in this dialogue the bishops are not conducting a free-floating and open-ended seminar. The dialogue is to lead to decision, in the hope of repentance, reconciliation, and amendment of life. It is finally the decision of the public figure, not that of the bishop, that matters. The bishop only acknowledges the decision made and acts accordingly. As Archbishop Donoghue and company put it, "We undertake this action to safeguard the sacred dignity of the most Holy Sacrament of the altar, to reassure the faithful and to save sinners."

There is a fourth argument that is not made explicitly but is insinuated in some episcopal statements; namely, that abortion is but one of many questions to be taken into account in making political decisions. Presumably, the June statement of the bishops precluded that argument by saying: "It is the teaching of the Catholic Church from the very beginning, founded on her understanding of her Lord's own witness to the sacredness of human life, that the killing of an unborn child is always intrinsically evil and can never be justified. If those who perform an abortion and those who cooperate willingly in the action are fully aware of the objective evil of what they do, they are guilty of grave sin and thereby separate themselves from God's grace. This is the constant and received teaching of the Church. It is, as well, the conviction of many other people of good will." What is said of abortion cannot be said of other questions currently in dispute in mainstream politics. Yet some bishops persist in suggesting that abortion is but one issue among others. Usually they add that it is the issue that has priority, but then undercut that claim with stringent warnings against "one-issue politics." No other question currently in dispute in mainstream politics has a comparable bearing on one's *communio* with Christ and his Church.

The June statement of the bishops conference, the statement by Donoghue, Baker, and Jugis, plus similar statements by other bishops may denote a historic moment in the American Catholic experience. Battered, bruised, and bloodied by vociferous criticism—deserved and undeserved, but mainly deserved—during the years of the sex-abuse crisis, a majority of bishops are, when faced with another unwelcome test of their leadership, neither cowed nor casting about for clever escapes. They have turned with new resolve to the tasks for which they were ordained. The above statement puts it tersely: "As bishops, we have the obligation to teach and guide the Catholic faithful whom we shepherd in the body of Christ." With that premise in place, the duties that follow are obvious, if not easy.

FT

UNDERSTANDING EVANGELICALS

"If you want a friend in Washington," said Harry Truman, "get a dog." Hyperbole, to be sure, but a half century later Washington, more so than New York, impresses me as a place of intense rivalries and strategic, even tactical, friendships. Not, of course, that there are not much deeper friendships, but little escapes the influence of the dominant, indeed only, business of the place, which is politics. It was not a good thing when, twenty or more years ago, intellectuals and writers, notably from New York, began to gravitate toward Washington, everyone finding a niche and cause to serve in the ceaseless networking anchored in think tanks and government office. And yet, in the same world there are places where partisan fervor is tempered by a serious engagement with ideas. One such place is the Ethics and Public Policy Center (EPPC), now headed by Ed Whelan. (To the charge that my having served on the board for many years makes me biased, I respond that it only informs my appreciation.) Among the good things EPPC does is hold "center conversations" that bring together bright people of diverse biases to discuss questions of mutual interest. This comment is occasioned by a recent center conversation, "Understanding American Evangelicals."

Here, for instance, is Mark Noll, the distinguished

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historian at Wheaton College, on different ways of answering the question "How many evangelicals are there in America?" Noll answers:

> Like the meaning of 'evangelical,' the question of how many evangelicals there are depends on how the concept is used. A redoubtable team of political scientists—John Green, Jim Guth, Bud Kellstedt, and Corwin Smidt—has concluded that about 25 percent of the adult American population is associated with the mostly white Protestant churches and movements that have historically been known as evangelical. Of that number, about two-thirds (or roughly 16 percent of the total population) are actively involved in their congregations. These political scientists argue that, for any correlation with social views or political behavior, the fact of *activity* is much more important than mere identification.
>
> But the bigger picture is considerably more complicated. If we use as the standard the four identifying markers of evangelical Christianity defined by David Bebbington (conversion, the Bible, activism in evangelism, and the cross of Christ), then a very substantial number of African Americans (perhaps five to six percent of the national population) also look like evangelicals. In addition, a very substantial number of individuals associated with the mainline Protestant churches (Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopal) also affirm all four of the characteristic evangelical markers, as do a substantial number of Roman Catholics. Taken together, there are probably about as many Catholics, black Protestants, and mainline Protestants who tell survey researchers they embrace the four evangelical characteristics as there are adherents to the conservative Protestant denominations. This would suggest, then, that about 30 percent of American adults practice a religion that looks more or less evangelical.

Alan Cooperman of the *Washington Post* suspects that we are witnessing in contemporary America "the most philo-Semitic Christianity in history." To which Noll responds: "One might say there's a fault line running through the evangelical world. On one side are those who feel that the nation of Israel is vital to the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. On the other are those who think that whatever was promised of good to Israel is now being fulfilled through the work of Christ in the Church. But even those people would recognize a special category for the Jewish people. And I think this has been one of the reasons for the offense given by evangelicals to some Jews: it's not just that Jews are included among those who are to be evangelized, but that they are singled out, as it were, as the prime target of evangelization—albeit with philo-Semitic feeling."

David Shribman of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* notes that it has been fifteen years since Pat Robertson ran for President. Some years from now "will he be regarded as someone who has been less on God's errand than on a fool's errand?" Noll: "The short answer is that Pat Robertson will disappear from history when his TV program goes off the air. His significance is to have embodied the politicization of a part of the evangelical world that had not been politicized before. The point about the evangelical world's mostly monopartisan politics not matching its internal religious diversity is important. The people that Robertson brought in had been outsiders religiously, if not politically. And the coalition that took place politically on the right did bequeath more unity—albeit unity of a partisan political character—than had ever existed in the religiously variegated evangelical community."

Many observers have noted that evangelical Protestants are a great deal more variegated, also politically, than the stereotypes allow or their leaders admit. If the frontal assault issues, such as abortion and gay marriage, were taken out of play, evangelicals might be spread across the liberal-conservative spectrum in about the same proportions as the general population. But that is a gigantic If. Abortion is the key. The *Roe v Wade* decision of 1973 is, one can reasonably argue, the most important event in American politics in the past three decades. More than any other factor, it has shaped present political alignments. That is a reality touched upon but not thoroughly addressed in this EPPC conversation. But then, EPPC and its programs can't do everything. They just try to.

FT

BACH, HITLER, AND THE PEOPLE CALLED GERMAN

Steven Ozment has done a remarkable thing in *A Mighty Fortress: A New History of the German People* (HarperCollins, 416 pp. $26.95). Ozment, a professor of history at Harvard, declines to see the history of Germany through the sole prism of the Third Reich. Rather, he begins with the beginning, going back to Tacitus in the first century A.D. The early story line is that of interaction with and, later, succession to the Roman Empire. In a manner reminiscent of Peter

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Brown's *The Rise of Western Christendom*, Ozment shows how the "barbarians" did not so much invade the Roman Empire as they engaged, over a long period of time, in complicated negotiations of identity and power from which Frankish and then German dominance gradually emerged.

Ozment believes that this way of telling the story is crucial to the future of the young democracy that is the Germany unified in 1990. He wants to offer a "fuller and fairer" depiction of German history. Historians who see the whole of that history stamped with the Nazi swastika are projecting, "both in fear and fancy," an impossible future. "On the one hand, there remains Germany the eternal land of obedience, with its documented modern history of aggression and totalitarianism. On the other, there is Germany the prostrate penitential state, an idealized egalitarian democracy with its gates thrown open to all, as portrayed by Günter Grass. Each of these options projects an abject German people on their knees either out of docility and fear of their rulers or in utopian self-sacrifice—highly unlikely future scenarios for the latter-day survivors of the twentieth century."

Moving somewhat rapidly from the first century to the sixteenth—it is, after all, a small book for such a big subject—Ozment finds the German character (he does not use the term "character") marked by an oscillation between "self-transcendence and self-abasement" grounded in the theology of Martin Luther. *Simul iustus et peccator*—at the same time sinner and justified—is at the heart of the German sensibility. "In Luther's view the German Christian, unlike the Roman, did not see his life on a spiritual continuum from diminishing sinfulness to increasing righteousness. His soul spanned two poles and he led a double life—hopeless and mad in the life he alone could sustain on earth, yet eternally secure in the heights to which his faith momentarily lifted him." This duality had its parallel in the political doctrine of the "two kingdoms." "Luther envisioned two coeval authorities ordained by God to govern the secular and ecclesiastical spheres of life—the princes and lords to oversee body and property, the pastors and priests to safeguard consciences and souls." In the absence of traditional ecclesiastical governance (the bishops did not go over to the Reformation), the princes became also "emergency bishops," thus conflating and confusing the two kingdoms. A small item indicating the impact of Luther: between 1520 and 1546, one third of everything published in the German language was written by Martin Luther. Luther's popular catechetical writings, later imitated by Catholics, "made the Germans Europe's most theologically literate people."

Sometimes explicitly, more often between the lines, Ozment offers a revisionist account of the role of Jews and Judaism in German history. Revisionist, that is, by contrast with the many post-Holocaust books on Germany that make anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism the leitmotif of the entire story. The Nazis—and many contemporary historians follow them in this—drew a direct line between their anti-Semitic views and Luther's notorious writings against the Jews late in his life. Ozment suggests that those writings were an aberrant eruption and notes that Luther's close associates, such as Melanchthon and Justus Jonas, in no way subscribed to Luther's fulminations. "Luther's anti-Jewish tracts lived on in the complete editions of his works but did not as a rule find their way into Lutheran confessions, catechisms, and hymns." An eighteenth-century anthology of anti-Jewish writings, *Judaism Unmasked*, has been called the anti-Semite's "literary munitions arsenal." Ozment notes, "Nowhere in its more than two thousand pages is the name of Martin Luther so much as mentioned."

Contrary to the conventional notion that eighteenth-century Pietists were given to social and political quietism, Ozment observes that Frederick William I converted from Calvinism to Pietism precisely in order to forge a stronger link between religion and the public order. Lutheran leaders of Pietism such as Johann Arndt, Philip Jakob Spener, and August Hermann Francke very deliberately put Christianity into the service of state and society. While maintaining a link with Luther's duality of worldly and spiritual orders, Spener also wrote, "We are under an obligation to achieve some degree of perfection." There is a moral duty, he contended, to be guided by the Holy Spirit in one's moral actions. Ozment offers an unexpected but, on second thought, plausible observation: "Here he anticipated Immanuel Kant's secular notion of a categorical imperative in conscience, demanding a universally applicable response to moral challenge." From Kant to Nietzsche, it is suggested, Germany's modern intellectual history is the product of "lapsed Lutherans" wrestling with irrepressible returns of a rejected theology.

Dialectic and Bipolarity

And of course there is no Germany without Johann Sebastian Bach, whose music was, says Ozment, in sharp contrast to that of the Enlightenment, and especially of the French Enlightenment. "What distinguished Bach's work and made it lasting was the musical-emotional demonstration of humankind's need for transcendence and majesty, yet utter inability to encompass and master either." The Enlightenment believed in man's ability to resolve the riddle of history, both to mock and to play the gods. "By contrast, Bach's music reasserted the dialectical character of reality and the

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bipolarity at the center of the human heart, each mysterious and complex beyond all human fathoming. . . . The alternating loss and restoration of harmony left the auditor with an intermittently pleasurable, but never final or secure, sensation of reconciliation, which was also the intention of the juxtaposition of Law and Gospel in the Lutheran sermon: oneness only in division, righteousness only in sin." Ozment makes much of the similar dialectic in Goethe's *Faust*. It may suggest something important about the German mind and spirit that in 1914 soldiers on the battlefront were sent three books: The New Testament, Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, and Goethe's *Faust*.

In Ozment's concluding discussion of Germany's present and possible futures, one misses any treatment of what appears to be the striking triumph of secularism in today's Germany. That may be because Ozment believes that triumph occurred in Wilhelmine Germany around the turn of the century. "If not Europe's most deeply religious land, Germany had been its most theologically engaged since the Reformation. Because of, or perhaps despite, such literacy, increasing numbers of inward Germans abandoned the traditional spiritual refuges for those promised by enlightened reason, empirical science, or post-Enlightenment fringe spiritual movements. Behind this transfer . . . lay centuries of excessive familiarity with, and estrangement from, mainstream religion." And this: "Finally, the long nineteenth-century deconstruction of German history and tradition, particularly the unprecedented intellectual and spiritual assault on mainstream morality and religion, had taken its toll by the 1920s, leaving many Germans confused, cynical, and exploring dark and unfamiliar pathways, not least that leading to National Socialism." In this light, one may infer that what appears to be a fairly recent triumph of secularism is, in fact, a return to the deep disillusionment of the early twentieth century which had been only momentarily interrupted by a religious resurgence in the immediate aftermath of the horror of the Third Reich.

Why Hitler?

In his account of the Third Reich, Ozment is particularly suggestive, and sometimes provocative. Nazi theory, especially its racial theory, was premised upon the Nietzschean motif of the highest and lowest man. In this, Hitler set himself against Christian egalitarianism, including the Lutheran *simul iustus et peccator* that portrayed Everyman as both the highest and the lowest. Although he never gained a majority vote and probably never had the support of a majority of Germans, Hitler gained power because—after the oppressive reparations imposed by the Allies following World War I, after years of desperate depression and runaway inflation, and after the manifest failure of the Weimar Republic—"he conveyed, like no other, the image of a leader more outraged over the people's plight than they, and possessed of the will and wit to end it—something Hindenburg and the Weimar Republic had long since lost the ability to do." In Germany's darkest days, everyone else had failed. "In the end it was that fact that gave Hitler, a politician who knew how to stuff a void with promises, a decisive advantage." Enough people went along, but after seizing power "the party ruled supreme only by fear and terror, and never succeeded in making Germany the voluntary, cohesive national community that its propaganda desired."

Jews and Judaism, Ozment emphasizes, were by no means in the forefront of Hitler's appeal to the German people. But they were always on his mind. "Hitler hated Christianity and communism for their social leveling and static societies, and he identified the supremely hated Jews as the mother root of both plagues." Contra Daniel J. Goldhagen and others who depict Germans as a nation of "willing executioners" just waiting for a Hitler to give them permission to go out and kill Jews, Ozment contends that hostility to Jews was not entrenched in German culture. "By comparison with most other states, nineteenth-century Germany had been a good place for Jews to live." There was resentment that Jews, less than one percent of the population, occupied so many places in the elite professions, but the majority-Protestant population desired only Jewish conversion and assimilation into Christian society. There was a similar resentment of the Catholic minority. "The perception that German Catholics and Jews had a prior allegiance to a religious community deemed higher than the German state endeared them neither to their secular and areligious, nor to their devoutly Protestant, fellow citizens. Still, as late as 1900, anti-Semitism was far rifer in France and Czarist Russia than in Germany."

Ozment emphatically rejects the claim of some historians that World War II was waged primarily to exterminate Europe's Jews. "The original motives for the war were completely self-centered, not Judeocentric or anti-Semitic. Germans wanted to avenge and repair, by total victory, the draconian reparations they had been compelled to pay and the terrible suffering they had endured since World War I." As for Hitler's personal motivations, his chief target was Christianity, through which, in his view, the Jewish corruption worked its evil. "Pure Christianity," Hitler said, "leads quite simply to the annihilation of mankind; it is wholehearted Bolshevism under a tinsel of metaphysics." Ozment writes, "Thus, while Hitler subjected German Jews to a 'final solution,' he singled out the removal of

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the 'rotten branch of Christianity' as the 'final task' of National Socialism, with the removal of Slavs, Gypsies, and homosexuals in between. Beyond the Jewish Holocaust lay the eradication of Christianity."

"German Christians"

The eradication would begin with co-optation, which Hitler attempted in establishing a church of "German Christians" to displace Protestant leadership. Ozment observes, "The liberal Protestant theology of the Enlightenment and the left-wing Hegelians was far more vulnerable to being co-opted by National Socialism than was traditional Christianity." With the encouragement of the Vatican, Catholics ducked their heads in the hope of weathering the storm and maintaining enough institutional strength "to preserve a base from which to fight principled moral battles," which they did in combating a euthanasia program that, before it was stopped, killed 72,000 physically or mentally impaired children and adults between 1939 and 1941.

In sum, says Ozment, "Through Christianity and Bolshevism, the ancient empire-destroying power of the Jews lived on in the modern world. Therein lay, for Hitler, the imperative of a 'final solution' for the Jews and of a postwar terror for the Christians." As for the implementation of the Holocaust against Jews, Slavs, and others, it was more of an opportunistic, jerry-built, improvisational affair dictated by circumstances rather than a well-coordinated imposition of a master plan. On this, Ozment's version is similar to the recent and much acclaimed study by Christopher Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*.

When the much smaller and economically enfeebled East Germany was unified with West Germany in 1990, the oddity appeared that Easterners were much more at peace with German history than their Western cousins. West German President Richard von Weizsacker observed that East Germans had a "more stable, serious, and truthful consciousness of German history," notwithstanding Communist Party lapses into "ideologization." Actually, those lapses largely explain the oddity. Easterners were taught that the Hitler years had nothing to do with them; the horror was the product of decadent capitalism against which Communists had heroically battled. For West Germans, and especially for intellectuals, the Third Reich is German history and everything that had gone before was discredited as having led directly to the horror. Among intellectuals espousing that view, Ozment singles out the novelist Günter Grass and the philosopher Jürgen Habermas. By almost equating Germany with Hitler and by insisting that Germany has a permanent "democracy deficit," such thinkers hobble the efforts of former leftists such as Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to lead the now united nation into an era of confident democracy. Similarly, Ozment excoriates those—mainly Jewish organizations—who demand never-ending "shakedowns" as reparations for what was done by dead Germans of a time now long past. All who make National Socialism and the Holocaust "the bookends of German history," Ozment contends, stand in the way of Germany's pressing need to meet the challenges of its democratic future.

Spiritual Deficit

The challenges are daunting. Ozment gives detailed attention to the complicated question of immigration, mainly Muslim and mainly from Turkey. Originally welcomed as "guest workers" who would do the work that Germans no longer were willing to do, legal and illegal immigrants are now as much as ten percent of the population and are not assimilating culturally and politically. Curiously, Ozment does not refer to a major factor exacerbating the problem, namely, the "baby deficit" created by the fact that German reproductive rates fall far short of replacement levels. And despite the centrality of religion suggested both by the book's title, *A Mighty Fortress*, and by the substance of Ozment's narrative, his conclusion entirely skirts the "spiritual deficit" of a secularist culture consumed by consumerism.

Ozment is insightful about the ambivalence of Germans toward the European Union, an ambivalence that he apparently shares. On the one hand, Germany's commitment to the transnational experiment is a bid to be accepted as a "normal" and no longer threatening people. On the other, most of the people, unlike the aforementioned intellectuals, want Germany to be a nation among the nations, while also fearing that its status as the richest and most powerful of the nations in the EU will once again arouse the fears of others.

While not downplaying the twelve-year nightmare that was the Third Reich, Steven Ozment insists that that is not the whole of German history, nor even the most important part. He rather likes and admires the German people and believes it is long past time to give their still young democracy a chance to vindicate that favorable disposition. His disposition is commendable and his argument is generally persuasive. But as with the music of Bach, one might observe, Germany's "alternating loss and restoration of harmony" may provide even the sympathetic observer with "an intermittently pleasurable, but never final or secure, sensation of reconciliation."

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A DENOMINATION CALLED ANGLICAN

Edward Norman, the canon of York Minster, has written many books. I suppose my favorite is *House of God*, an intelligently annotated and magnificently illustrated history of Christian architecture. It was published some fifteen years ago and if you come across it in a used bookstore, don't miss the opportunity of picking it up. Norman's latest is *Anglican Difficulties* (Continuum), in which he concludes that Anglicanism has irretrievably lost what was once "a faithfully preserved deposit of Christian doctrines," and announces that he is entering into communion with the Catholic Church. The book is reviewed in the *Times Literary Supplement* along with *Anglican Identities*, a collection of essays edited by Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury.

In his review, Father Peter Cornwell, a former Anglican who was vicar at the University Church at Oxford, writes: "In all honesty we have to turn back to the real questions which Edward Norman puts to the Church of England.... Ever since the national Church followed the Empire to become a worldwide communion, it has had troubles. Escaping from the authority of the Crown in Parliament, what now could hold this burgeoning body together and help resolve its inevitable disputes? Although Williams repudiates 'the necessity of a central executive authority,' pressure of events has moved his Communion in that direction, with the evolution of the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council, the regular meetings of the Primates, and now what may emerge from the Eames Commission on gay clergy. The more complicated a game becomes, the more players are involved, the more you find you need a referee or umpire, not to create the game—only players can do that—but to serve the game, to let it move forward. Roman Catholics may be tempted to think that Anglicans will wake up one day to find that they have reinvented the papacy."

If a new Anglican papacy is both pointless and impossible, Anglicans may be rescued from impending death by the existing papacy. But, Cornwell observes, "If the papacy is really to serve unity, then Catholics have to make sure that it is more clearly a gift which can enable Anglican gifts to flourish and not be crushed." Much as John Paul II wrote in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, with primary, but by no means exclusive, reference to the Orthodox. By the time this sees print, the Eames Commission may have issued its report. It is to address, inter alia, the fragmentation of the Anglican communion precipitated by the unilateral action of the Episcopal Church in the U.S. in installing as bishop of New Hampshire a married man who left his wife and children to live with his male partner.

I recently had dinner in Europe with a UK bishop who serves on the commission. He opined that the entire "unpleasantness" was due to the fact that bishops in Africa and elsewhere had not yet caught up to the Americans, and the cultural laggards would have to be told in no uncertain terms that they can't hold back the entire communion. He predicted that the commission would "come down hard" on bishops from the Southern hemisphere who are engaged in "outrageous irregularities," such as offering episcopal oversight to "fundamentalist Anglicans" in the U.S. What was striking in his conversation is that there was not a single reference to the possibility that the New Hampshire matter might entail questions of theological or moral consequence, never mind truth. It was entirely a matter of some slow learners making themselves a bother. Advised that, if he is right about the commission report, it almost certainly means the end of the "special relationship" between Canterbury and Rome and the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue's hope for ecclesial reconciliation, the bishop seemed quite untroubled. Having abandoned even nominal adherence to Scripture and tradition, Anglicanism would likely be viewed by Rome as simply one more Protestant denomination. The prospect appeared to faze the bishop not at all. It would be a very nice denomination in which he felt very much at home. I hope, and rather expect, he was wrong about the report of the Eames Commission. We should know in short order.

FT

MORE ON MILOSZ

Father Jeremy Driscoll's moving and instructive reflection on Czeslaw Milosz in this issue was written shortly before Milosz's death on August 14 at age ninety-three. In discussions with the great poet before his death, Driscoll had the opportunity of exploring with him his own understanding of his life's work, and especially the religious character of his controlling vision. Since the death of Milosz, others have weighed in with their interpretations, not least being the irrepressible British commentator Christopher Hitchens. Writing for *Slate*, Hitchens would have us believe that the key to understanding Milosz was his opposition to "the oldest form of oppression known to the mind: that of religion." Possibly because he can find no support for that judgment in the work of Milosz, Hitchens invokes Leo Strauss on the importance of indirection and "writing

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between the lines." It turns out that Milosz, like Strauss, was practicing the subversion of "religious tyranny—in this case Christianity." "The long-term achievement of Milosz," Hitchens declares, was to surreptitiously undermine "the party 'lines' that claim for themselves exclusive truth." Hitchens' unsurprising effort to recruit Milosz to his weary campaign against the baleful influence of religion is severely embarrassed by what the poet wrote and what he said about what he wrote.

It is not as though Milosz "got religion" in his declining years. Upon the occasion of his death, the *New Republic* reissued online Leon Wieseltier's review of Milosz's 1983 book, *The Witness of Poetry*, based on his Charles Eliot Norton Lectures at Harvard. I have in this space been critical from time to time of Mr. Wieseltier's strident attacks on Christianity. It is the more gratifying, therefore, to discover that twenty-plus years ago he wrote so sympathetically of Milosz's faith. At Harvard, Milosz asked, "Is non-eschatological poetry possible?" Critics at the time attributed such unfashionable musings to Milosz's being "so very Slavic." Wieseltier protested: "Milosz's stark spirituality cannot be easily evaded. The poet's Polishness is finally beside the point. Terror is not the only condition for transcendence, though it helps."

The Witness of Poetry, Wieseltier wrote, "is the credo of a great poet. It reveals that Milosz is really a religious thinker." Unlike Hitchens, Wieseltier can cite Milosz in support of his claim. Milosz wrote of his devotion to "Latin as the language of the Church and of literature, the theological quarrels of the Middle Ages, Latin poetry as a model for Renaissance poets, white churches in the baroque style." Wieseltier observes, "His reverence for human custom is based upon the personal participation in it. The same is true of his religiousness. He does not shill for the spiritual life, or for its civil utility; he lives spiritually." The critical reaction to Milosz by secularists leads Wieseltier to write, "Perhaps the most paradoxical feature of this century is that it is the century for which the spiritual should be most obvious. How could the slaughters of Hitler and Stalin, and the Communist captivity of half of Europe and most of Asia, not shake the soul?"

Wieseltier writes that, like another great Polish thinker, Leszek Kolakowski, Milosz "long ago exchanged the scholastics of the Party for the scholastics of the Church." "There are sufferings that put the purely secular to shame, that create a need for meanings that neither reason nor society can satisfy. The secularization of modern life was anyway an exaggeration; a lot of religion remained. But there is no way that some of the traditional themes of religion can be dodged after the scale and style of contemporary carnage." As for Milosz, he said that he and his poetry and prose are to be understood as "the passionate pursuit of the Real." To which Wieseltier adds, "The capital R refers to something more than ordinary cognition but not quite to mysticism." Driscoll's essay suggests that Milosz was not quite so chary about the mystical. Wieseltier recognizes, however, that, in rejecting the secular utopianism of Marxism, Milosz represented "a necessary exchange of new lies for old truths." Intellectually, spiritually, and aesthetically, Milosz's ambition was not modest. "His solution," wrote Wieseltier, "is the resacralization of the world."

After the death of Milosz, Wieseltier wrote again about the greatness of the man, this time in the *New York Times Book Review*. Their friendship was cemented, he says, by a long conversation in 1982 in which they discovered that "we shared an envy of mystics." Milosz, he notes, "was not embarrassed by the crudities of religion: they were the imagination's answers to the mind's questions. They created the 'second space' without which he saw no possibility of human flourishing." He continues: "For Milosz, the journey was not the goal, the goal was the goal. Irony, for which he had a wicked appetite, was not adequate as a meaning for life. He was a man without illusions, holding steadfastly to a confidence in what he could not see." Wieseltier concludes his tribute with these words by Milosz:

> You gave me gifts, God-Enchanter.
> I give you thanks for good and ill.
> Eternal light in everything on earth.
> As now, so on the day after my death.

WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ When I spoke at ceremonies marking the inauguration of Robert Sloan as president of Baylor University some years ago, I noted that atheist faculty members who support the idea of a Christian university are less of a problem than devout Christians who don't (see FT, "Eleven Theses," January 1996). It seems that is turning out to be the case at Baylor. Last May the Board of Regents fell one vote short of asking for President Sloan's resignation, and it was rumored that he would be forced out in July. Sloan and his ambitious program "Baylor 2012" are still standing, although shaken. Baylor 2012 is based on the premise that, in Sloan's words, "Baylor University has the opportunity to become the only major university in America, clearly centered in the

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Protestant traditions, to embrace the full range of academic pursuits." Baylor, which has close to 15,000 students, has been attracting some academic superstars under Sloan's regime. Not surprisingly, this has generated resentments among some of the faculty who liked things the way they were before Baylor aimed for the big time. Labels such as conservative and liberal get muddled here. Under the old regime, devout Bible-believing Christians operated with a "two spheres" approach to education. Science and reason were in one sphere, faith and piety in another, and there was an agreement that neither sphere would be allowed to interfere with the other. When in 1991 some Baptists demanded that their understanding of faith be in control, Baylor withdrew from the Southern Baptist General Convention. Now his opponents claim that Sloan is once again violating the truce. While for understandable reasons Sloan does not usually quote John Paul II's 1998 encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, which is not recognized as authoritative by many Baptists, that is essentially the argument he makes in contending that the truce was fundamentally wrongheaded. Because the ultimate source and object of truth is one, there is finally only one sphere of truth, no matter how various the disciplines and perspectives at work within that sphere. Faculty, insists Sloan, should be encouraged to teach with an undivided mind. This is the understanding classically set forth in Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge*, and it is noteworthy that, when Sloan invited William Dembski to establish a major program at Baylor, it was called the Michael Polanyi Center. Dembski, famous for advancing the "intelligent design" argument against dogmatic Darwinism, ran into ferocious opposition from proponents of evolution who are defenders of the old truce. There are other complaints against Sloan, such as his allegedly heavy-handed and top-down management style, but these are the rumblings common in most faculties. The crux of the conflict at Baylor is over the nature of truth, and whether it is possible under evangelical Protestant auspices to build a world-class research university and thus provide a counterforce to the dreary history of the declension of Protestant (and Catholic) higher education from Christian seriousness, a declension powerfully narrated by James Burtchaell's *The Dying of the Light*. (For a summary of Burtchaell's thesis see FT, "The Decline and Fall of the Christian College," June 1991.) The cultural and intellectual influence of Christian higher education in this society has a lot riding on the bold, and predictably embattled, experiment underway at Baylor.

■ It's all so unfair. According to Nancy Halpern of the Strickland Group, a New York "executive coaching organization," the metrosexual men celebrated by the TV show "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" are moving ahead rapidly in business. If men who cultivate their softer and feminine side are doing so well, asks *Seattle Times* columnist Carol Kleiman, "Why is the glass ceiling still so firmly in place for women? Why are so few women in the 'glass elevator' that propels men to the top?" (A glass elevator goes through a glass ceiling?) "Because," says Halpern, "women not only are a minority, but they also get conflicting advice. For twenty years they've been told to be more like men—and clearly that doesn't work." The system works for men who are like women but not for women who are like men. One might expect Ms. Kleiman to conclude that women should be like women. But that would imply an idea, i.e., stereotype, of what it means to be womanly. It's so, so unfair.

■ It was once known as the home of the Acadians, and Longfellow immortalized the British expulsion of the French in "Evangeline." In more recent history, people knew of Halifax, Nova Scotia, for its heroic part in World War II's Battle of the Atlantic. But now it's slim pickings in the struggle for cultural distinction. "Halifax is One of the World's Capitals of Lesbian Pulp Fiction" is the heading of a full-page story in Canada's *National Post*. It seems that Mount St. Vincent College in Halifax, which is described as "a small liberal arts university best known for its women's studies programs," has 119 titles of lesbian pulp fiction in its library. Count them: 119! With a nod to *Oklahoma*, everything is up to date in Halifax, they've gone about as fer as they can go. In Kansas City, never mind New York, I expect there are hundreds of closets stacked with more than 119 dirty books. Just think: so many world capitals of pornography. Yes but, at Mount St. Vincent "some of the books are suggested reading for the students." Well, that is a distinction. At most schools, from Harvard to Podunk State, they are required reading, especially in women's studies programs. But stifle your giggles, please, and remember that this is Canada, where a national paper must stretch to assure Canadians that they should not be as forgotten as they are. Oh yes, Mount St. Vincent is a nominally Catholic school; so nominal that the news story doesn't mention it. The school is receiving no complaints about its being on the cutting edge, except for one. "You could tell he was a fairly religious, conservative person," said librarian Meg Raven. "He said something like, 'You are going to burn in Hell for having this material on

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display.'" To which the reporter has the snappy wrap-up line, "Sounds like he'd been reading *Satan Was a Lesbian*." Oh, those Canadians.

■ It was not "withdrawn," it was just "not published," insists the staff of the bishops conference (USCCB). At issue is the "Presidential Questionnaire" that the conference sends to candidates every four years. It's a kind of checklist of candidates' positions in comparison with those of the USCCB. Pro-life groups did not like this year's questionnaire at all. It is, they complained, all apples and oranges. Said Austin Ruse of the Culture of Life Foundation, "It improperly equates doctrinal issues like abortion with judgment calls like the minimum wage." In short, it was skewed in favor of a candidate who, while supporting abortion and embryonic stem-cell research, also favors a long list of items favored by the staff of the USCCB and therefore comes out as being more in agreement with Catholic teaching. The USCCB wants it understood that the questionnaire was not withdrawn because of pro-life criticism. The communications office said it "decided not to publish the results of the questionnaire because neither of the candidates responded to it before the deadline." Perhaps it is more accurate to say that they decided not to publish the results because there were no results. On the other hand, maybe one or both candidates completed their assignments late. (Apparently Ralph Nader and the fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-party candidates were not asked.) The most likely explanation is that the Bush campaign saw the questionnaire as a booby trap, and the Kerry campaign, in one of its makeovers which included firing two "religion outreach" directors who turned out to be flaming lefties, either lost the form or decided that the less said about Kerry's Catholicism the better. Either way, the implication is that the opinion of the USCCB is not high on the list of things requiring attention in presidential politics.

■ My first contact with William F. Buckley, Jr. was many years ago when I was still viewed as a man of the left and wrote him a stiff note protesting something he had said about civil rights leaders. He wrote back, politely pointing out that I had misquoted him and inviting me to lunch. For some reason I don't remember, that lunch didn't come off, but in the years since then there have been many lunches, dinners, and meetings on his long-running but now discontinued show "Firing Line." (Dinner invitations to his residence off Park Avenue direct one to "73 East 73rd Street at 7:30." He assures me the number 73 has no occult significance.) We have disagreed on matters of substance (see, for example, While We're At It, October), but I count Bill Buckley a dear friend and admire him as the exemplification of what it means to be a gentleman. His has been an extraordinary life of achievement and adventure: essayist, novelist, lecturer, editor, sailor, musician, candidate for mayor of New York, and the alchemist who turned a conservatism of irritated gestures into an intellectual, cultural, and political movement of great consequence. (I still have a matchbook printed with a photo that, taking off from a *New York Times* ad campaign in those years, has President Reagan reading Bill's magazine under the caption, "I got my job through *National Review*.") Bill is nearing eighty now and slowing down a bit, but he's slowing down from what most mortals never dreamed of getting up to. He has now brought out *Miles Gone By: A Literary Autobiography* (Regnery). It's as big (594 pages) as it is irresistible, collecting some of his best and more personal pieces and providing me hours of learning and remembering what I once knew. In his review of the book, William McGurn notes that some have criticized Bill for obsessions such as sailing and the harpsichord, to which McGurn responds: "The concern seems to be that enjoying oneself so thoroughly, at a time when So Many Serious Issues Still Threaten The Republic, violates some precept. But that is only true when measured against the nasty calculus of a utilitarian age that forgets what it means to be human. *Miles Gone By* is a bracing reminder of an essential conservative principle: that the state exists so that we might have private lives, not vice versa." I know a little less than next to nothing about sailing, but greatly admired this passage toward the end of the book: "You have shortened the sail just a little, because you want more steadiness than you get at this speed, the wind up to twenty-two, twenty-four knots, and it is late at night, and there are only two of you in the cockpit. You are moving at racing speed, parting the buttery sea as with a scalpel, and the waters roar by, themselves exuberantly subdued by your powers to command your way through them. Triumphalism . . . and the stars seem to be singing for joy." Of that passage, McGurn writes, "You could say the same thing about the satisfaction that comes from writing a fine paragraph. Or a life that set itself, with astounding success, against most of the prevailing winds of his day." I do not take too seriously Bill's asseverations (as he might say) about retiring from this, that, and the other thing. He may have shortened the sail to get more steadiness, but I am among the many who count on his continuing company to alert us to the stars singing for joy.

■ In Winslow Homer's 1899 painting "The Gulf Stream," a black sailor is trapped on a sinking boat that is surrounded by sharks. The sharks encircle the

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boat, writes the noted art critic Nicolai Cikovsky, "with sinuous seductiveness." They "can be read as castrating temptresses, their mouths particularly resembling the *vagina dentata*, the toothed sexual organ that so forcefully expresses the male fear of female aggression." Reviewing Roger Kimball's *The Rape of the Masters* (Encounter), David Gelerntner writes: "Why would a critic write such stuff? Peer pressure, says Mr. Kimball: 'to ensure his own place as a "brilliant" "scholar" in a "great" contemporary university.' But he provides the raw material for a deeper explanation. A century ago, professors could regard themselves as socially superior to artists and could afford to be generous and admiring without jeopardizing their own self-regard. But modern professors can no longer pull rank on anyone. Accordingly, two mammoth projects were launched. Since the early decades of the twentieth century, intellectuals have built a case that criticism can itself be a species of literature. There is something to that. But the educated public has continued to regard great artists as geniuses and great critics as critics. Hence the remarkable follow-on project of the past thirty-odd years: cutting the geniuses down to size. Mr. Kimball quotes Professor Keith Moxley, speaking for thousands of like-minded colleagues: '"Genius" is a socially-constructed category.' Thus Michelangelo merely *appeared* to be a genius to the long-ago (pre-industrial, profoundly religious, all-but-incomprehensible) mind of sixteenth century Italy!" The title of Mr. Kimball's book will likely arouse critical theorists to further erotic frenzies, but his brief against intellectuals who write things that only other intellectuals could believe is not exaggerated. And Mr. Gelerntner's shot at a sociological explanation of what has brought us to our present pass is entirely plausible. "Many writers have discussed the death of authority; we ought to ponder the death of admiration too," says Gelerntner. When critics put "genius" in sneer quotes, they are really saying, "That was then, I am now. Don't look at what the 'genius' painted or wrote. Look at me!" It is not a pretty sight.

■ From *The Cresset*, published by Valparaiso University and edited for some twelve years by our former editor, Jim Nuechterlein, Martin Marty's *Context* picks up on some suggestive ponderings by William Placher, a Protestant theologian at Wabash College in Indiana. (Wabash is, I am told, one of only two all-male colleges left in the country and is the alma mater of two of our former editorial assistants, Matthew Rose and Vincent Druding.) Placher writes, "Belief in the Trinity seems as if it ought to be at the center of Christian faith." We are baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, other sacraments and sacramentals are in the same trinitarian name, and churches, colleges, and institutions beyond number are called "Trinity." "And yet," writes Placher. His reflection is, mutatis mutandis, as pertinent to Catholics as to Protestants, or at least to Catholics who have unreflectively internalized an individualistic American culture. Here is Placher: "And yet. My guess is that a great many of us have rarely if ever heard a sermon on the Trinity. The average contemporary preacher hopes that Trinity Sunday will come on Father's Day or Flag Day or some occasion that provides an excuse for preaching about something else. [Theologian] Karl Rahner observed that, if the doctrine of the Trinity had to be dropped as false, most Christians today would carry on their lives pretty much as before. The Trinity may be in the printed catechism, he said, but it is not in the catechism of the heart. When the bishop and theologian Gregory of Nyssa moved to Constantinople in the fourth century, he heard debates about the Trinity on every street corner. 'Garment sellers, moneychangers, food vendors,' he wrote, 'they are all at it. If you ask for change, they philosophize for you about generate and ingenerate natures. If you inquire about the price of a loaf of bread, the answer is that the Father is greater and the Son is inferior. If you speak about whether the bath is ready, they express the opinion that the Son was made out of nothing.' . . . I don't think I've ever heard an argument about the Trinity in the grocery store. Is it because we all agree? Or is it because we just don't much care? Dorothy Sayers, theologian and writer of mystery stories, once remarked that to the average churchgoer today, the mystery of the Trinity means, 'The Father is incomprehensible, the Son is incomprehensible, and the whole thing is incomprehensible. Something put in by theologians to make it more difficult—nothing to do with daily life or ethics.' . . . One of the things that philosophers and psychologists teach us is that we exist as persons only in relation. A Robinson Crusoe or Tom Hanks confined to his island alone from infancy doesn't become a fully human person. There's no one with whom to interact. Likewise, if Mary is the child of a loving family and Sally is the product of an abusive home, there is not in either case some core identity of who they really are [that is] unaffected by environment. If you get up in the morning—don't try this at home, as they used to say on TV—and everyone you meet looks at you with puzzled concern and says, 'Are you feeling OK?' you'll be queasy by lunchtime. For good or ill, we become who we are in relation with others. That relations so shape our identities constitutes a central ele-

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ment of what makes us persons. A rock isn't a person, because a rock is what it is whether there's another rock next to it or not. But we're different. We're persons because our relations contribute to the constitution of our identities. Human sin pushes us to think of ourselves in radically individualistic terms, and our society is particularly inclined toward individualism. We Americans, if our ancestors were not Native Americans or slaves forced here against their will, are generally the descendants of people who didn't fit in, who weren't comfortable with the communities in which they lived, who were willing to go off and start up by themselves. Their genes are in us, and they provide us with many virtues, but they can also make us remarkably self-centered. To steal an old joke, the most popular picture magazine used to be one called *Life*. All of life. That was succeeded by *People*. Not all of life, but at least all people. Then *People* was challenged on the newsstands by *Us*. Not even all people—just us. And now I see on the newsstand a magazine called *Self*. I can't think where we could go from here. A lot of social forces contribute to our self-centeredness. Still, I wonder if a misguided philosophy of what it is to be a person doesn't play at least a small role. I think that I, by myself, define my essential identity and that everything else—my friendships, my obligations, my relation to my environment—is all secondary to who I really am. Such an assumption about who a person is slides easily into the ethical conviction that how I treat the rest of you isn't nearly as important as the care and feeding of me. The doctrine of the Trinity, by contrast, reminds us that persons are essentially in relation. Our relations aren't an 'add-on,' they're at the core of who we are. To the extent that this isn't true for human persons, it's a sign of our failure to be persons in the fullest sense, after the model of the divine persons."

■ Older physicians, according to a recent medical journal report, are more likely than younger physicians to prepare advance directives for how they want to be treated if they are incapacitated, but they are much more skeptical about whether such directives will have a significant bearing on the treatment they actually receive. They know from experience. I suppose there is no surprise in their being more likely to prepare directives since, being older, they have more occasion to think about the end of life. It turns out, however, that their skepticism about how they will, in fact, be treated is fully warranted. This study reports that doctors, whether older or younger, do not follow advance directives in 65 percent of cases. It turns out that other factors, such as prognosis, perceived "quality of life," and the wishes of family and friends, are much more determinative of treatment. All in all, the study is reassuring. To be surrounded by family and friends who genuinely care for you is an irreplaceable blessing. Advance directives assume a knowledge of contingencies and complexities that cannot be foreseen. As important, when we are in the fullness of health, it is too easy to say there are conditions under which we would no longer want to live. As I wrote in *As I Lay Dying*, a personal account of having been there, one discovers that a circumstance that others may view as "worse than death" is vibrant with life. That is something one learns only when it happens. Advance directives written in the absence of advance knowledge provide very uncertain guidance. The study prompted me to go back and read again our Ramsey Colloquium statement, "Always to Care, Never to Kill." It stands up very well, and you might want to check it out on the website (*www.firstthings.com*).

■ *Time* magazine and others did some heavy breathing about deep cultural change in reporting that, from 1993 to 2002, the number of Americans identifying themselves as Protestant dropped from 63 percent to 52 percent. The number identifying themselves as Catholic remains stable while "other"—Eastern Orthodox, Muslim, and sundry Eastern religions—has increased from three to seven percent. I'm not sure about the significance of the decline in those identifying themselves as Protestant. Many who used to call themselves Protestant now prefer to be known simply as Christian. The term Protestant always had an unecumenical over-againstness about it, meaning chiefly that one is not a Catholic. Over the last decade, and for many reasons, Protestants have felt less urgency about making a point of their not being Catholic. Witness the generally positive response to Evangelicals and Catholics Together, launched in 1994. Plus, many of the large non-Catholic "megachurches" studiously eschew denominational labels of any sort, and "Protestant" is often viewed as such a label. My hunch is that the survey, conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, says something interesting about changing Protestant attitudes toward Catholicism, and about the anti-denominational and anti-institutional character of religion in America, which remains emphatically Protestant.

■ I don't know how many times, perhaps three or four, I have referred to Father Andrew Greeley in these pages. My usual point is to acknowledge his longstanding contributions when he sticks to what he knows as a sociologist, and especially when he criticizes secularization theorists opining on the inexorable

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decline of religion. Each time I make a favorable mention, however, I receive protests from readers who wonder how I can be so nice to a man who is so outrageously wrongheaded on a thousand other subjects. Part of the answer, of course, is my famously irrepressible niceness. For readers who fear that I am uninformed about "the real Andrew Greeley," herewith an excerpt from a recent column of his in the *Chicago Sun-Times* on President Bush. "He is not another Hitler. Yet there is a certain parallelism. They have in common a demagogic appeal to the worst side of a country's heritage in a crisis. Bush is doubtless sincere in his vision of what is best for America. So too was Hitler. The crew around the President—Donald Rumsfeld, John Ashcroft, Karl Rove, the 'neo-cons' like Paul Wolfowitz—are not as crazy perhaps as Himmler and Goering and Goebbels. Yet like them, they are practitioners of the Big Lie—weapons of mass destruction, Iraq democracy, only a few 'bad apples.' Hitler's war was quantitatively different from the Iraq war, but qualitatively both were foolish, self-destructive, and criminally unjust. This is a time of great peril in American history because a phony patriotism and an America-worshipping religion threaten the authentic American genius of tolerance and respect for other people. The strongest criticism that the administration levels at Senator John Kerry is that he changes his mind. In fact, instead of a President who claims an infallibility that exceeds that of the pope, America would be much better off with a President who, like John F. Kennedy, is honest enough to admit mistakes and secure enough to change his mind." George W. Bush as Adolf Hitler? A reader asks how Fr. Greeley can still be a priest in good standing. That is a question best addressed to the Archbishop of Chicago, but I expect his answer would be that, if he kicked out every priest who is a political nut case, there would be a lot of empty altars in Chicago. The problem is not unique to Chicago, although it is no small blessing that Fr. Andrew Greeley is.

■ It was my first visit to Australia. Invited by George Cardinal Pell, the engagingly orthodox archbishop of Sydney, to give a series of lectures in Sydney and Melbourne, I received a most positive impression of the place. Upon my return, I read an article on Australia that lamented the "cultural cringe" to which Australians are prone. It did not seem that way to me. But that may be because I could not help but draw comparisons with Canada, where I was born and reared. When I was a schoolboy we all took considerable pride in the classroom maps that depicted one quarter of the world in the pink of the British Empire, of which Australia was very much part. To my young mind, the Empire and the King (later, the Queen) were ever so much more impressive than "the States" where there was a President named Truman (later, Eisenhower). Since Pierre Trudeau & Co. declared that Canadian history began with the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, Canada has been in a cultural cringe much more pronounced than anything I detected in Australia. Of course, Canada had the problem of being two nations, French and English, with the English clearly dominant, and some argue that there was no alternative to Trudeau's way of resolving the problem. But the dropping of the British identity gave birth to the dominant—sometimes it seems the only—public discussion in what continues to be two nations: What constitutes Canadian identity? And that discussion turns, with wearying repetition, on the ways in which Canadians are not like Americans. Australians, by way of contrast, seem much more confident about who they are. They are, among other things, decidedly pro-American. Perhaps that would be different if, like the Canadians, they lived side-by-side with the U.S., with 80 percent of their population living within a hundred miles of the U.S. border. In Australia it is said that they will not let their geography defeat their history. Theirs is a huge British island, with a small aboriginal minority, in a huge Asian sea. Canada has a much more respectable European history, with distinguished French components, but Australia seems much more comfortable with its history, which is based in its being a British penal colony in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. That is no doubt one reason why they have, again just recently, decided to maintain connections with the Queen. Although I might mention that Cardinal Pell is a strong and public proponent of republicanism, which he believes would increase confidence in Australian identity. Perhaps he is right about that. We met with parliamentarians in Canberra, the nation's capital, and afterwards sat in on "question period" in which members baited the prime minister, John Howard, who seemed to relish the ordeal. I noted that Parliament was opened by the Speaker's leading the body in reciting the Lord's Prayer. Very unlike America, although not so unlike what Americans might think appropriate were it not for "the separation of church and state." Very, very unlike Canada in its determination to be unlike America. Don't get me wrong. I love Canada, and try to spend some time there each summer at the family cottage in Quebec. But I could not help making comparisons with Australia, and decidedly to Australia's advantage on some scores. I hope I get invited back to Australia. And that the Canadians will still let me in.

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■ When the Catholic Church says something is a "scandal," the reference is not to bad publicity but to endangering the souls of others. Here's the official definition: "Scandal is an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil. The person who gives scandal becomes his neighbor's tempter. He damages virtue and integrity; he may even draw his brother into spiritual death. Scandal is a grave offense if by deed or omission another is deliberately led into a grave offense" (Catechism § 2284). Hence the concern about politicians who publicly and persistently support the abortion license. But what about nuns? Twenty years ago, on Respect Life Sunday, twenty-six nuns signed a full-page ad in the *New York Times* declaring that there is more than one authentically Catholic position on abortion. The Vatican got on the case and notified their superiors that the nuns must retract or face expulsion from their orders. Dominican Sister Donna Quinn was one of the signers. Twenty years later she says, "We held firm. The Vatican backed off actually, but they'll never admit it." Quinn, along with four other nuns, marched in last April's raucous "March for Women's Lives" in Washington. Ann Carey of *Our Sunday Visitor* notes also that the National Coalition of American Nuns gave its "national medal of honor" to Francis Kissling, founder of Catholics for Free Choice. Ms. Carey is puzzled that these nuns seem to have an untroubled relationship with their orders and with the Church at a time when bishops are trying to clarify the meaning of *communio* and Communion. Ms. Carey is not alone.

■ Father Michael Prior, author of *Zionism and the State of Israel: A Moral Inquiry*, was a main speaker this spring at a conference of six hundred people, one half from the U.S., sponsored by the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center and held at the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem. The conferees met with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in his Ramallah compound, and he thanked them for their efforts to counter Christian support for Israel in the U.S. The title of the conference was "Challenging Christian Zionism: Theology, Politics, and the Palestine-Israel Conflict." Fr. Prior attacked churches and Bible scholars who "buy in very comfortably to the biblical narrative that allows legitimacy to preferential treatment on the part of God in favor of one people, that not only legitimizes but actually mandates genocide." The Book of Exodus, "which we read with great piety, is actually a con job." The authors of these biblical stories, he continued, "were narrow-minded, xenophobic, militaristic, pin-headed bigots." Joshua, who led the occupation of Canaan, is "the patron saint of ethnic cleansing." Shortly after his return to the U.S., Fr. Prior was hit by a massive heart attack and died. Christian Zionists discern the hand of YHWH. They would, wouldn't they?

■ Survey research and common sense combine in telling us that children tend to share the values of their parents, including their political views and way of life. It is far from the most important factor in abortion, but there are enormous political consequences in the forty million children aborted since the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision of 1973. In the June issue of the *American Spectator*, policy wonk Larry Eastland does the number crunching on "missing voters." "There were 12,274,368 in the Voting Age Population of 205,815,000 missing from the 2000 presidential election, because of abortions from 1973-82. In this year's election, there will be 18,336,576 in the Voting Age Population missing because of abortions between 1973 and 1986. In the 2008 election, 24,408,960 in the Voting Age Population will be missing because of abortions between 1973-90." Moreover, according to a major survey by Wirthlin Worldwide, Democrats account for 40 percent more abortions than Republicans (49 percent versus 35 percent). Statistically, the more liberal Democrats are, the more abortions they have; the more conservative Republicans are, the fewer abortions. Eastland writes, "Examining these results through a partisan political lens, the Democrats have given the Republicans a decided advantage in electoral politics, one that grows with each election. Moreover, it is an advantage that they can never regain. Even if abortion were declared illegal today, and every single person complied with the decision, the advantage would continue to grow until the 2020 election, and would stay at that level throughout the voting lifetime of most Americans living today." Given the partisan distribution of "missing voters" as a result of abortion, says Eastland, in the 2000 election Gore would have won Florida by 45,366 votes instead of Bush winning by 537. The abortion factor powerfully affects not only presidential elections but also congressional elections in the most crucial swing states. Eastland concludes: "As liberals and Democrats fervently seek new voters and supporters through events, fundraisers, direct mail, and every other form of communication available, they achieve results minuscule in comparison to the loss of voters they suffer from their own abortion policies. It is a grim irony lost on them, for which they will pay dearly in elections to come." I'm not vouching for Eastland's argument. I suspect there are variables not taken into account. But it does seem blindingly obvious: killing your offspring is not a good way to multiply your kind. As I say, this is very far

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from being the most important consideration regarding abortion, but it is not uninteresting. It should not be necessary to say that, whatever gratification conservatives may draw from the working of a rough justice suggested by these statistics, they must not forget that being pro-life means being pro-life also with respect to the children of those who aren't.

■ All in all, Adam Kirsch, book editor of the *New York Sun*, seems to want to like Gertrude Himmelfarb's new book, *The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments* (Knopf, 284 pp., $25). He says nice things about her argument that intellectual elites have been strongly biased in favor of the French version of enlightenment, including this: "Such elitism helps to explain the philosophes' enthusiasm for enlightened despots, and their lack of interest in political liberty. This marks the central difference between France and America. The America Founders, she writes, devised a Constitution based not on pure reason but on practical checks and balances; they did not theorize about the best imaginable government, but actually created the best possible one. They even managed to make liberty and religion mutual allies, to the surprise of Tocqueville: 'Among us,' he wrote, 'I had seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom almost always move in contrary directions. Here I found them united intimately with one another.'" But then there is Kirsch's remarkable caveat that Professor Himmelfarb fails to appreciate that British "benevolence" masked an increasingly rapacious capitalism, "while Voltaire and Diderot showed greater moral courage in confronting religious questions than did the rather evasive [Adam] Smith." A good Straussian may here discern the influence of Leo Strauss. Were he not so evasive (read cowardly) Smith might have joined Voltaire in crying, "Écrasez l'infame!" The infamous thing, of course, was Christianity, and the Catholic Church in particular, although the cleverly obnoxious Voltaire used the phrase also in connection with other irrationalities, an irrationality being any idea or practice of which he disapproved. Mr. Kirsch does restrain himself from suggesting that Tocqueville was also evasively "writing between the lines" against religion's dolorous influence on American democracy. He ends up with the evasive observation that the book "is meant to start debates, not to settle them; in that purpose, Ms. Himmelfarb succeeds admirably." No, Prof. Himmelfarb clearly wants to settle the debate about the relative merits of eighteenth-century enlightenments, and Mr. Kirsch just as clearly disagrees. One has to wonder what oppressive regime—unless it is the conservative *Sun*'s friendly disposition toward Gertrude Himmelfarb—compels him to write with such Straussian indirection.

■ "One-size-fits-all solutions are often inadequate. We must renew our efforts to ensure that the punishment fits the crime. Therefore we do not support mandatory sentencing that replaces judges' assessments with rigid formulations. . . . Finally, we must welcome ex-offenders back into society as full participating members, to the extent feasible." Thus spake the U.S. bishops in a November 2000 document on the American criminal justice system, "Responsibility and Rehabilitation." Less than two years later, meeting at Dallas in June 2002, they took it all back, at least insofar as the teaching applies to priests accused of sexual abuse with minors. The "essential norms" hastily adopted at Dallas come up for review by Rome this December. There is every reason to believe that review will be informed by "Rights of Accused Priests," a recent article by Avery Cardinal Dulles in *America*. The "zero tolerance" policy of Dallas, he writes, is in fifteen ways unjust, unwise, or in violation of church law and Christian morality, or all of these combined. Most of the points made by Dulles have received repeated attention in these pages. They include the denial of a presumption of innocence and due process, a definition of sex abuse so malleable as to mean almost anything, an abandonment of proportionality between offense and punishment, an abdication of the episcopal duty of judgment, betrayals of confidentiality, the "forced laicization" of priests contrary to the doctrine of priestly consecration, and other actions reflecting "an attitude of vindictiveness to which the Church should not yield." I expect my favorable mention of Dulles' article will again produce protests that he and I are "soft" on sexual abuse. Nonsense. There must be zero tolerance of crime. The punishment of the innocent and the demonstrably reformed sinner who poses no credible threat to anyone is itself another crime. The denial of the power of conversion is a denial of the Church's very reason for being. The Dallas document quoted from the Pope's address to American cardinals in April 2002: "There is no place in the priesthood or religious life for those who would harm the young." Nobody should deny that, but the document omitted what the Pope also said: "At the same time, we cannot forget the power of Christian conversion, that radical decision to turn away from sin and back to God, which reaches to the depths of a person's soul and can work extraordinary change." Minimally, one might expect the bishops to rise to the norms they prescribe for the criminal justice system of the secular order. In a more hopeful mode, one might even dare to look for an understanding of sin, forgiveness, conversion, and justice consonant with the gospel the Church proclaims.

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When it comes time for Rome to reconsider the gravely flawed norms of Dallas, the pertinent parties should have Cardinal Dulles' checklist of necessary remedies close at hand.

■ John F. Kennedy wore his Catholicism as "unself-consciously and elegantly as he wore his London clothes," wrote the late John Cogley, *Commonweal* columnist and Kennedy adviser. Icon is the word to describe Cogley's status among "*Commonweal* Catholics" in the years during and immediately following the Vatican Council II. Before he died in 1976, Cogley joined the Episcopal Church, believing that there he could live a lower-case catholicism free of the cumbersome burden of authority. Many years later, commenting on John Kerry's failure to make a plausible connection between his pro-abortion politics and Catholic faith, the current editors of *Commonweal* cite the above quote and offer this reflection: "Historians now tell us that Kennedy's Catholicism was perhaps not so much unselfconscious as it was unthinking. In any event, forty-four years later the potential conflict between a President's duty both to uphold the Constitution and to abide by Catholic teaching is perhaps even more acute. This time the divide is not over issues like the constitutionality of tax support for religious schools but the much more fundamental question of what obligations the state has to protect fetal life. The social context has also changed. Kennedy was the charismatic symbol of Catholic material success and cultural assimilation, not Catholic distinctiveness. At the dawn of a new century, Catholics are asking if assimilation has not become simple co-optation, and they increasingly wonder what must be done to preserve any distinctive Catholic practice or identity." Catholics are indeed asking that, and many of them—including perhaps a majority of the bishops—have arrived at the answer that the "acceptance" of Catholicism represented by JFK's election was a poisonous prize.

■ Paul Holmer died this past June. Michael Linton, who writes on music in these pages, tells me that as a young man Holmer was both pianist with Dimitri Metropolis and lead piano for Mordecai Ham, a famous Baptist gospel crusader. That suggests a person with a certain cultural reach. Born in 1916, he was the son of free-church dissenters from Sweden's establishment Lutheranism. Inspired by David Swenson of the University of Minnesota, Holmer was instrumental in introducing Søren Kierkegaard to an American audience. It was as professor of philosophical theology at Yale, however, that Holmer helped to form generations of pastors, theologians, and philosophers. Linton writes: "These are issues of the human heart and Holmer insisted that theology was a kind of therapy, or care, for the human heart. Once a discussion at the Yale Divinity School common room was devoted to the question of whether or not the institution was a 'caring' place. Henri Nouwen (with whom Holmer shared a deep friendship), spoke at length about the importance of 'caring' and a colleague seconded his remarks, at equal length. Holmer, a bit irritated, said, 'You get the feeling we're all a lot of hothouse plants just crying for attention. I thought that Christian caring was something specific. A doctor cares for the patient by restoring the patient's health. The teacher cares for the student by expunging ignorance in the student. Now Christian care means helping to overcome human sinfulness by the grace of God. That's Christian care.' Holmer's Christian care was to clear away confusions and to allow various capacities to be nursed and others to be starved. Students would ask Holmer what he thought was required to be a theologian, thinking that perhaps he would say Syriac as well as Greek and Hebrew plus a good foundation in modern philosophy and psychology. Instead Holmer would say, 'Well, I would think that a hunger and thirst for righteousness would be required. And meekness. It helps to be poor in heart.'" Michael Linton visited Holmer in Minnesota shortly before his death. He had Parkinson's and his wife Phyllis was in frail health, but he could still read and was as alert as ever. "He talked with gratitude about his life, his children, and his colleagues. We shared some chocolate and prayed and said our goodbyes." Paul Holmer, *Requiescat in pace*.

■ It would seem to be a slam dunk for Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. The fellow works so hard at dividing Americans over fake alarms about First Amendment violations, but this time he is on to something. Sun Myung Moon, under apparent U.S. Senate auspices, put a big costume shop crown on his head and another on his wife's and read a declaration that "declared to all heaven and earth that Reverend Sun Myung Moon is none other than humanity's Savior, Messiah, Returning Lord, and True Parent." The declaration was read in Korean, so the senators and representatives present weren't sure what was happening. Said Roscoe G. Bartlett, Republican of Maryland, "We have the king and queen of the prom, the king and queen of 4-H, the Mardi Gras and all sorts of other things. I had no idea what he was king of." The politicos claimed they were lured to the meeting because their constituents were getting citizenship awards from one of Mr. Moon's front organizations. Never mind, it's the sort of thing that should not be happening in a Senate meeting room. Huffed Barry

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Lynn, "You had what effectively amounted to a religious coronation in a government building of a man who claims literally to be the savior." I am grateful for the opportunity to agree with Mr. Lynn. We are also indebted to the *New York Times* for highlighting this outrage on its front page. As the Lord Mayor of Dublin, John Philpot Curran, said on July 10, 1790: "The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance." (See also Elmer Davis, 1954.) Admittedly, coronations in the U.S. Senate office building are not a regular thing, since most senators would respectfully decline the demotion, but staunch friends of this constitutional republic will follow the advice of Madison in taking alarm at the first experiment with our liberties. A tip of our crown to Barry Lynn and Americans United.

■ Despite our unflagging efforts, aided by outside proofreaders, typos still crop up from time to time. With new technologies of electronic transmission we cannot even blame the fabled "printer's devils." So it is with considerable relief that we received the following item forwarded by a reader who found it on the Internet: "I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulaclty uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid. Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deson't mttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig." Amazing indeed.

■ New groups of ROFTERS (Readers of FIRST THINGS) are cropping up at a most remarkable rate. In fact, there are so many that there is no longer space enough to list them all here. We will post newly formed groups and contact information for their conveners as promptly as possible, along with already established groups, on the website, *www.firstthings.com*. Please go there to see if there is a group near you. If you wish to convene a ROFTERS group, please contact Erik Ross at *er@firstthings.com*. These are independent groups. How often they meet and the format of discussions are questions left entirely to conveners and their ROFTER friends. Of course it is very gratifying to the editors that there is such interest in exploring with others the questions addressed in the journal. We thank you.

Sources: New books about Anglicans, *Times Literary Supplement*, July 9, 2004. Hitchens on Milosz, reprinted in *New York Sun*, September 1, 2004.

WHILE WE'RE AT IT: Metrosexuals in glass elevators, *Seattle Times*, August 8, 2004. Lesbians in the library, *National Post*, August 21, 2004. McGurn on Buckley, *New Criterion*, September 2004. Kimball review, *Wall Street Journal*, September 3, 2004. Placher on the Trinity, *Context*, September 2004. Advance directives, *www.archinternmed.com*, July 26, 2004. Greeley, *Chicago Sun Times*, June 11, 2004. Abortion nuns, *Our Sunday Visitor*, July 18, 2004. Prior on Zionism, Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation press release, July 26, 2004. Kirsch on Himmelfarb, *New York Sun*, September 1, 2004. Dulles on Dallas, *America*, June 21-28, 2004. JFK's Catholicism, *Commonweal*, June 18, 2004. Moon's coronation, *New York Times*, June 24, 2004.

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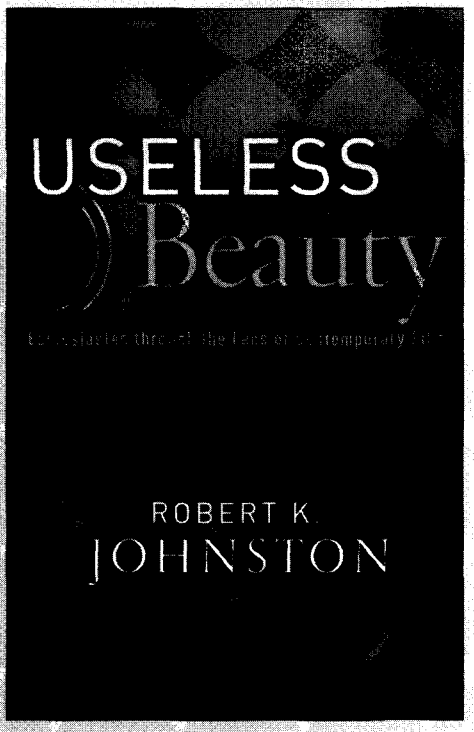

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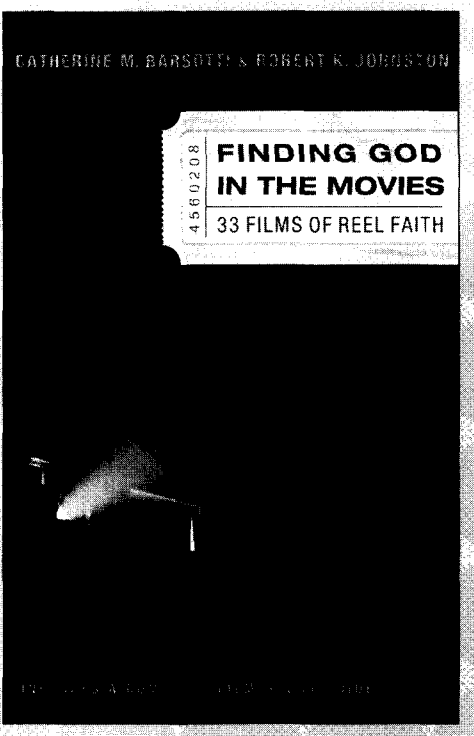
—**Walter Brueggemann,**
Columbia Theological Seminary



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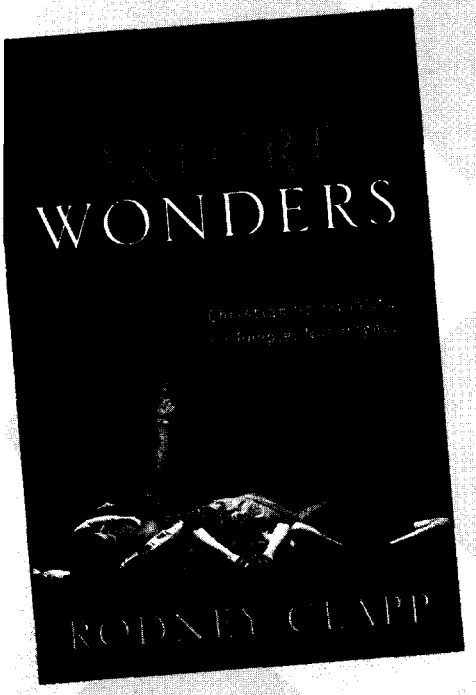

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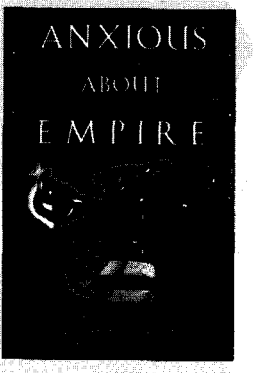

Anxious about Empire
Wes Avram, editor
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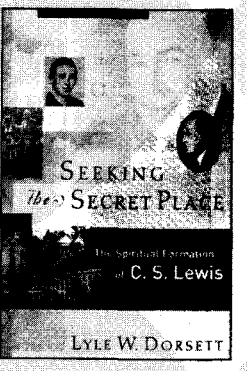
Offers a response to the "new American empire" and addresses issues such as the transnational nature of the church, the use of scripture in imperial rhetoric, and Christian worship as a response to global violence. Contributors include Robert Bellah, Wendell Berry, Jean Bethke Elshtain, and Eugene McCarraher.



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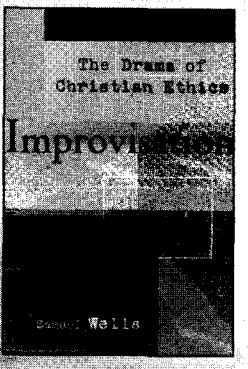
—Gilbert Meilaender, Valparaiso University



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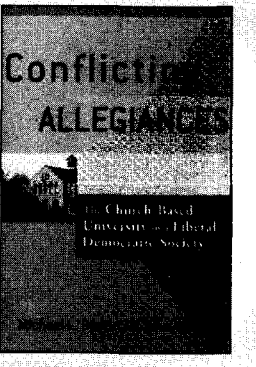

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Michael L. Budde and John Wright, editors
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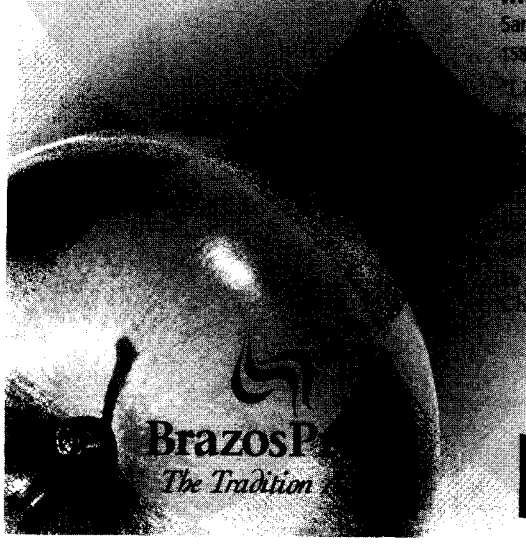

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